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THE CHRISTIAN. BY HALL CAINE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

TAUCHNITZ EDITION.

By the same Author,

THE BONDMAN . . . . . 2 vols.
THE MANXMAN . . . . . 2 vols.

THE CHRISTIAN

A STORY

BY

HALL CAINE,

AUTHOR OF "THE BONDMAN," "THE MANXMAN," ETC.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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The period of the story is the last quarter of the nineteenth century. No particular years are intended. The time occupied by the incidents of the First Book is about six months, of the Second Book about six months, of the Third Book about six months; then there is an interval of half a year, and the time occupied by the incidents of the Fourth Book is about six weeks. An Author's Note will be found at the end of the work.

THE CHRISTIAN.

FIRST BOOK.—THE OUTER WORLD.

I.

On the morning of the 9th May 18—, three persons important to this story stood among the passengers on the deck of the Isle of Man steamship *Tynwald* as she lay by the pier at Douglas getting up steam for the passage to Liverpool. One of these was an old clergyman of seventy, with a sweet, mellow, child-like face; another was a young man of thirty, also a clergyman; the third was a girl of twenty. The older clergyman wore a white neckcloth about his throat, and was dressed in rather threadbare black, of a cut that had been more common twenty years before; the younger clergyman wore a Roman collar, a long clerical coat, and a stiff broad-brimmed hat with a cord and tassel. They stood amidships, and the Captain coming out of his room to mount the bridge, saluted them as he passed.

"Good morning, Mr. Storm."

The young clergyman returned the salutation with a slight bow and the lifting of his hat.

"Morning to you, Parson Quayle."

The old clergyman answered cheerily, "Oh, good morning, Captain, good morning."

There was the usual inquiry about the weather outside, and drawing up to answer it, the Captain came eye to eye with the girl.

"So this is the grand-daughter, is it?"

"Yes, this is Glory," said Parson Quayle. "She's leaving the old grandfather at last, Captain, and I'm over from Peel to set her off, you see."

"Well, the young lady has got the world before her —at her feet, I ought to say. You're looking as bright and fresh as the morning, Miss Quayle."

The Captain carried off his compliment with a breezy laugh, and went along to the bridge. The girl had heard him only in a momentary flash of consciousness, and she replied merely with a side glance and a smile. Both eyes and ears, and every sense and every faculty, seemed occupied with the scene before her.

It was a beautiful spring morning, not yet nine o'clock, but the sun stood high over Douglas Head, and the sunlight was glancing in the harbour from the little waves of the flowing tide. Cars were rattling up the pier, passengers were trooping down the gangways, and the decks fore and aft were becoming thronged.

"It's beautiful!" she was saying, not so much to her companions as to herself, and the old parson was laughing at her bursts of rapture over the commonplace scene, and dropping out in reply little driblets of simple talk— sweet, pure nothings, the innocent babble as of a mountain stream.

She was taller than the common, and had golden red hair and magnificent dark grey eyes of great size. One of her eyes had a brown spot, which gave at the first

glance the effect of a squint, at the next glance a coquettish expression, and ever after a sense of tremendous power and passion. But her most noticeable feature was her mouth, which was somewhat too large for beauty, and was always moving nervously. When she spoke her voice startled you with its depth, which was a kind of soft hoarseness, but capable of every shade of colour. There was a playful and impetuous raillery in nearly all she said, and everything seemed to be expressed by mind and body at the same time. She moved her body restlessly, and while standing in the same place her feet were always shuffling. Her dress was homely, almost poor, and perhaps a little careless. She appeared to smile and laugh continually, and yet there were tears in her eyes sometimes.

The young clergyman was of a good average height, but he looked taller from a certain distinction of figure. When he raised his hat at the Captain's greeting, he showed a forehead like an arched wall and a large close-cropped head. He had a well-formed nose, a powerful chin, and full lips, all very strong and set for one so young. His complexion was dark, almost swarthy, and there was a certain look of the gipsy in his big golden-brown eyes with their long black lashes. He was clean shaven, and the lower part of his face seemed heavy under the splendid fire of the eyes above it. His manner had a sort of diffident restraint; he stood on the same spot without moving, and almost without raising his drooping head; his speech was grave and usually slow and laboured, his voice was bold and full.

The second bell had rung, and the old parson was making ready to go ashore.

"You'll take care of this runaway, Mr. Storm, and deliver her safely at the door of the hospital?"

"I will."

"And you'll keep an eye on her in that big Babylon over there?"

"If she'll let me, sir."

"Yes, indeed, yes, I know; she's as unstable as water and as hard to hold as a puff of wind."

The girl was laughing again. "You might as well call me a tempest and have done with it, or," with a glance at the younger man, "say a storm—Glory St—— Oh!"

With a little catch of the breath she arrested the name before it was uttered by her impetuous tongue, and laughed again to cover her confusion. The young man smiled faintly and rather painfully, but the old parson was conscious of nothing.

"Well, and why not? A good name for you too, and you richly deserve it. But the Lord is lenient with such natures, John. He never tries them beyond their strength. She hasn't much leaning to religion, you know."

The girl recalled herself from the busy scene around and broke in again with a tone of humour and pathos mixed.

"There! call me an infidel at once, grandfather. I know what you mean. But just to show you that I haven't exactly registered a vow in heaven never to go to church in London because you've given me such a dose of it in the Isle of Man, I'll promise to send you a full and particular report of Mr. Storm's first sermon. Isn't that charming of me?"

The third bell was ringing, the blast of the steam-whistle was echoing across the bay, and the steamer was

only waiting for the mails. Taking a step nearer to the gangway the old parson talked faster.

"Did Aunt Anna give you money enough, child?"

"Enough for my boat fare and my train."

"No more! Now Anna is so——"

"Don't trouble, grandfather. Woman wants but little here below— Aunt Anna excepted. And then a hospital nurse——"

"I'm afraid you'll feel lonely in that great wilderness."

"Lonely with five millions of neighbours!"

"You'll be longing for the old island, Glory, and I half repent me already——"

"If ever I have the blue-devils, grandpa, I'll just whip on my cape and fly home again."

"To-morrow morning I'll be searching all over the house for my runaway."

Glory tried to laugh gaily. "Upstairs, downstairs, and in my lady's chamber."

"'Glory,' I'll be crying. 'Where's the girl gone at all? I haven't heard her voice in the house to-day. What's come over the old place to strike it so dead?'"

The girl's eyes were running over, but in a tone of gentle raillery and heart's love she said severely, "Nonsense, grandfather; you'll forget all about Glory going to London before the day after to-morrow. Every morning you'll be making rubbings of your old runes, and every night you'll be playing chess with Aunt Rachel, and every Sunday you'll be scolding old Neilus for falling asleep in the reading-desk, and—and everything will go on just the same as ever."

The mails had come aboard, one of the gangways had been drawn ashore, and the old parson, holding his

big watch in his left hand, was diving into his fob-pocket with the fingers of the right.

"Here"—panting audibly as if he had been running hard—"your mother's little pearl ring."

The girl drew off her slack, soiled glove and took the ring in her nervous fingers.

"A wonderful talisman is the relic of a good mother, sir," said the old parson.

The young clergyman bent his head.

"You're like Glory herself in that, though—you don't remember your mother either."

"No—no."

"I'll keep in touch with your father, John, trust me for that. You and he shall be good friends yet. A man can't hold out against his son for nothing worse than choosing the Church against the world. The old man didn't mean all he said; and then it isn't the thunder that strikes people dead, you know. So leave him to me; and if that foolish old Chalse hasn't been putting notions into his head——"

The throbbing in the steam-funnel had ceased, and in the sudden hush a voice from the bridge cried, "All ashore!"

"Good-bye, Glory! Good-bye, John! Good-bye both!"

"Good-bye, sir," said the young clergyman, with a long hand clasp.

But the girl's arms were about the old man's neck. "Good-bye, you dear old grandpa, and I'm ashamed I—I'm sorry I—I mean it's a shame of me to—good-bye!"

"Good-bye, my wandering gipsy, my witch, my runaway!"

"If you call me names I'll have to stop your mouth, sir. Again—another——"

A voice cried, "Stand back, there!"

The young clergyman drew the girl back from the bulwarks, and the steamer moved slowly away.

"I'll go below—no, I won't, I'll stay on deck. I'll go ashore—I can't bear it; it's not too late yet. No, I'll go to the stern and see the water in the wake."

The pier was cleared and the harbour was empty. Over the white churning water the seagulls were wheeling, and Douglas Head was gliding slowly back. Down the long line of the quay the friends of the passengers were waving adieus.

"There he is—on the end of the pier! That's grandpa waving his handkerchief! Don't you see it? The red and white cotton one! God bless him! How *wae* his little present made me! He has been keeping it all these years. But my silk handkerchief is too damp—it won't float at all. Will you lend me—— Ah, thank you! Good-bye! Good-bye! Good——"

The girl hung over the stern rail, leaning her breast upon it and waving the handkerchief as long as the pier and its people were in sight, and when they were gone from recognition she watched the line of the land until it began to fade into the clouds and there was no more to be seen of what she had looked upon every day of her life until to-day.

"The dear little island! I never thought it was so beautiful! Perhaps I might have been happy even there if I had tried. Now if I had only had somebody for company! How silly of me! I've been five years wishing and praying to get away, and now! . . . It *is* lovely though, isn't it? Just like a bird on the water! And when you've been born in a place . . . the dear little island! And the old folks, too! How lonely they'll be,

after all! I wonder if I shall ever . . . I'll go below. The wind's freshening, and this water in the wake is making my eyes . . . Good-bye, little birdie! I'll come back—I'll . . . Yes, never fear, I'll——"

The laughter and impetuous talking, the gentle humour and pathos had broken at length into a sob, and the girl had wheeled about and disappeared down the cabin-stairs. John Storm stood looking after her. He had hardly spoken, but his great brown eyes were moist.

II.

Her father had been the only son of Parson Quayle, and chaplain to the Bishop at Bishopscourt. It was there he had met her mother who was lady's-maid to the bishop's wife. The maid was a bright young Frenchwoman, daughter of a French actress famous in her day, and of an officer under the Empire, who had never been told of her existence. Shortly after their marriage, the chaplain was offered a big mission station in Africa, and being a devotee, he clutched at it without fear of the fevers of the coast. But his young French wife was about to become a mother, and she shrank from the perils of his life abroad, so he took her to his father's house at Peel and bade her farewell for five years.

He lived four, and during that time they exchanged some letters. His final instructions were sent from Southampton: "If it's a boy, call him John (after the Evangelist), and if it's a girl, call her Glory." At the end of the first year she wrote; "I have shortened our darling, and you never saw anything so lovely! Oh, the sweetness of her little bare arms, and her neck, and her little round shoulders! You know she's red—I've really got a red one—a curly red one! Such big beaming eyes

too! And then her mouth and her chin and her tiny red toes! I don't know how you can live without seeing her!" Near the end of the fourth year he sent his last answer: "Dear wife, this separation is bitter, but God has willed it, and we must not forget that the probabilities are that we may pass our lives apart." The next letter was from the English Consul on the Gaboon River, announcing the death of the devoted missionary.

Parson Quayle's household consisted only of himself and two maiden daughters, but that was too much for the lively young Frenchwoman. While her husband lived she suffocated under the old-maid *régime,* and when he was gone she made no more fight with destiny, but took some simple ailment and died suddenly.

A bare hillside frowned down on the place where Glory was born, but the sun rose over it, and a beautiful river hugged its sides. A quarter of a mile down the river there was a harbour, and beyond the harbour a bay, with the ruins of an old castle standing out on an islet rock, and then the broad sweep of the Irish Sea—the last in those latitudes to "parley with the setting sun." The vicarage was called Glenfaba, and it was half a mile outside the fishing-town of Peel.

Glory was a little red-headed witch from the first, with an air of general uncanniness in everything she did and said. Until after she was six there was no believing a word she uttered. Her conversation was bravely indifferent to considerations of truth or falsehood, fear or favour, reward or punishment. The parson used to say, "I'm really afraid the child has no moral conscience—she doesn't seem to know right from wrong." This troubled his religion, but it tickled his humour, and it

did not disturb his love. "She's a perfect pagan—God bless her innocent heart!"

She had more than a child's genius for make-believe. In her hunger for child company, before the days when she found it for herself, she made believe that various versions of herself lived all over the place, and she would call them out to play. There was Glory in the river, under the pool where the perch swam, and Glory down the well, and Glory up in the hills, and they answered when she spoke to them. All her dolls were kings and queens, and she had a gift for making up in strange and grand disguises. It was almost as if her actress grandmother had bestowed on her from her birth the right to life and luxury and love.

She was a born mimic, and could hit off to a hair an eccentricity or an affectation. The frown of Aunt Anna, who was severe, the smile of Aunt Rachel, who was sentimental, and the yawn of Cornelius Kewley, the clerk, who was always sleepy, lived again in the roguish, rippling face. She remembered some of her mother's French songs, and seeing a street-singer one day, she established herself in the market-place in that character, with grown people on their knees around her, ready to fall on her and kiss her and call her Phonodoree, the fairy. But she did not forget to go round for the ha'pennies either.

At ten she was a tomboy and marched through the town at the head of an army of boys, playing on a comb between her teeth and flying the vicar's handkerchief at the end of his walking-stick. In these days she climbed trees and robbed orchards (generally her own) and imitated boys' voices and thought it tyranny that she might not wear trousers. But she wore a sailor's

blue stocking-cap, and it brightened existence when, for economy's sake and for the sake of general tidiness, she was allowed to wear a white woollen jersey. Then somebody who had a dinghy that he did not want asked her if she would like to have a boat. Would she like to have paradise, or pastry cakes, or anything that was heavenly! After that she wore a sailor's jacket and a sou'wester when she was on the sea, and tumbled about the water like a duck.

At twelve she fell in love—with love. It was a vague passion interwoven with dreams of grandeur. The parson being too poor to send her to the girls' college at Douglas, and his daughters being too proud to send her to the dame's school at Peel, she was taught at home by Aunt Rachel, who read the poetry of Thomas Moore, knew the birthdays of all the royal family, and was otherwise meekly romantic. From this source she gathered much curious sentiment relating to some visionary world where young girls were held aloft in the sunshine of luxury and love and happiness. One day she was lying on her back on the heather of the Peel hill with her head on her arms, thinking of a story that Aunt Rachel had told her. It was of a mermaid who had only to slip up out of the sea and say to any man, "Come," and he came—he left everything and followed her. Suddenly the cold nose of a pointer rubbed against her forehead, a strong voice cried, "Down, sir!" and a young man of two-and-twenty, in leggings and a shooting-jacket, strode between her and the cliffs. She knew him by sight. He was John Storm, the son of Lord Storm, who had lately come to live in the mansion-house at Knockaloe, a mile up the hill from Glenfaba.

For three weeks thereafter she talked of nobody else,

and even began to comb her hair. She watched him in church, and told Aunt Rachel she was sure he could see quite well in the dark, for his big eyes seemed to have the light inside of them. After that she became ashamed, and if anybody happened to mention his name in her hearing, she flushed up to the forehead and fled out of the room. He never once looked at her, and after a-while he went away to Canada. She set the clock on the back-landing to Canadian time so that she might always know what he was doing abroad, and then straightway forgot all about him. Her moods followed each other rapidly, and were all of them overpowering and all sincere, but it was not until a year afterwards that she fell in love, in the church vestry, with the pretty boy who stood opposite to her in the Catechism class.

He was an English boy of her own age, and he was only staying in the island for his holidays. The second time she saw him it was in the grounds at Glenfaba, while his mother was returning a call indoors. She gave him a little tap on the arm, and he had to run after her —down a bank and up a tree, where she laughed and said, "Isn't it nice?" and he could see nothing but her big white teeth.

His name was Francis Horatio Nelson Drake, and he was full of great accounts of the goings-on in the outer world, where his school was, and where lived the only "men" worth talking about. Of course he spoke of all this familiarly and with a convincing reality which wrapped Glory in the plumage of dreams. He was a wonderful being altogether, and in due time (about three days) she proposed to him. True, he did not jump at her offer with quite proper alacrity, but when she mentioned that it didn't matter to her in the least whether

he wanted her or not, and that plenty would be glad of the chance, he saw things differently and they agreed to elope. There was no particular reason for this drastic measure, but as Glory had a boat it seemed the right thing to do.

She dressed herself in all her Confirmation finery and stole out to meet him under the bridge where her boat lay moored. He kept her half-an-hour waiting, having sisters and other disadvantages, but "once aboard her lugger" he was safe. She was breathless, and he was anxious, and neither thought it necessary to waste any time in kissing.

They slipped down the harbour and out into the bay, and then ran up the sail and stood off for Scotland. Being more easy in mind when this was done, they had time to talk of the future. Francis Horatio was for work —he was going to make a name for himself. Glory did not see it quite in that light. A name! yes, and lots of triumphal processions; but she was for travel—there were such lots of things people could see if they didn't waste so much time working.

"What a girl you are!" he said derisively; whereupon she bit her lip, for she didn't quite like it. But they were nearly half-an-hour out before he spoiled himself utterly. He had brought his dog, a she-terrier, and he began to call her by her kennel name and to say what a fine little thing she was, and what a deal of money they would make by her pups. That was too much for Glory. She couldn't think of eloping with a person who used such low expressions.

"What a girl you are!" he said again; but she did not mind it in the least. With a sweep of her bare arm she had put the tiller hard a port, intending to tack back

to Peel, but the wind had freshened and the sea was rising, and by the swift leap of the boat the boom was snapped and the helpless sail came flapping down upon the mast. Then they tumbled into the trough, and Glory had not strength to pull them out of it, and the boy was of no more use than a tripper. She was in her white muslin dress, and he was nursing his dog, and the night was closing down on them, and they were wabbling about under a pole and a tattered rag. But all at once a great black yacht came heaving up in the darkness and a grown-up voice cried, "Trust yourself to me, dear."

It was John Storm. He had already awakened the young girl in her, and thereafter he awakened the young woman as well. She clung to him like a child that night, and during the four years following she seemed always to be doing the same. He was her big brother, her master, her lord, her sovereign. She placed him on a dizzy height above her, amid a halo of goodness and grandeur. If he smiled on her she flushed, and if he frowned she fretted and was afraid. Thinking to please him, she tried to dress herself up in all the colours of the rainbow, but he reproved her and bade her return to her jersey. She struggled to comb out her red curls until he told her that the highest ladies in the land would give both ears for them, and then she fondled them in her fingers and admired them in a glass.

He was a serious person, but she could make him laugh until he screamed. Excepting Byron and "Sir Charles Grandison," out of the vicar's library, the only literature she knew was the Bible, the Catechism, and the Church Service, and she used these in common talk with appalling freedom and audacity. The favourite butt of

her mimicry was the parish clerk saying responses when he was sleepy.

The Parson: "O Lord, open Thou our lips" (no response). "Where are you, Neilus?"

The Clerk (awakening suddenly in the desk below): "Here I am, your reverence—and our mouth shall show forth Thy praise."

When John Storm did laugh he laughed beyond all control, and then Glory was entirely happy. But he went away again, his father having sent him to Australia, and all the light of her world went out.

It was no use bothering with the clock on the back-landing, because things were different by this time. She was sixteen, and the only tree she climbed now was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and that tore her terribly. John Storm was the son of a lord, and he would be Lord Something himself some day. Glory Quayle was an orphan, and her grandfather was a poor country clergyman. Their poverty was sweet, but there was gall in it nevertheless. The little forced economies in dress, the frocks that had to be turned, the bonnets that were beauties when they were bought, but had to be worn until the changes of fashion made them frights, and then the mysterious parcels of left-off clothing from goodness knows where—how the independence of the girl's spirit rebelled against such humiliations.

The blood of her mother was beginning to boil over, and the old-maid *régime,* which had crushed the life out of the Frenchwoman, was suffocating the Manx girl with its formalism. She was always forgetting the meal-times regulated by the sun, and she could sleep at any time and keep awake until any hour. It tired her to sit demurely like a young lady, and she had a trick of lying

down on the floor. She often laughed in order not to cry, but she would not even smile at a great lady's silly story, and she did not care a jot about the birthdays of the royal family. The old aunts loved her body and soul, but they often said, "Whatever is going to happen to the girl when the grandfather is gone?"

And the grandfather, good man, would have laid down his life to save her a pain in her toe, but he had not a notion of the stuff she was made of. His hobby was the study of the runic crosses with which the Isle of Man abounds, and when she helped him with his rubbings and his casts he was as merry as an old sand-boy. Though they occupied the same house, and her bedroom, that faced the harbour, was next to his little musty study that looked over the scullery slates, he lived always in the tenth century and she lived somewhere in the twentieth.

The imprisoned linnet was beating at the bars of its cage. Before she was aware of it she wanted to escape from the sleepy old scene, and had begun to be consumed with longing for the great world outside. On summer evenings she would go up Peel hill and lie on the heather, where she had first seen John Storm, and watch the ships weighing anchor in the bay beyond the old dead castle walls, and wish she were going out with them—out to the sea and the great cities north and south. But existence closed in ever-narrowing circles round her and she could see no way out. Two years passed, and at eighteen she was fretting that half her life had wasted away. She watched the sun until it sank into the sea, and then she turned back to Glenfaba and the darkened region of the sky.

It was all the fault of their poverty, and their poverty was the fault of the Church. She began to hate the

Church; it had made her an orphan; and when she thought of religion as a profession, it seemed a selfish thing anyway. If a man was really bent on so lofty an aim (as her own father had been), he could not think of himself; he had to give up life and love and the world—and then these always took advantage of him. But people had to live in the world for all that, and what was the good of burying yourself before you were dead?

Somehow her undefined wishes took shape in visions of John Storm, and one day she heard he was home again. She went out on the hill that evening, and, being seen only by the gulls, she laughed and cried and ran. It was just like poetry, for there he was himself lying on the edge of the cliff, near the very spot where she had been used to lie. On seeing him she went more slowly, and began to poke about in the heather as if she had seen nothing. He came up to her with both hands outstretched, and then suddenly she remembered that she was wearing her old jersey, and she flushed up to the eyes, and nearly choked with shame. She got better by-and-by, and talked away like a mill-wheel, and then fearing he might think it was from something quite different, she began to pull the heather, and to tell him why she had been blushing. He did not laugh at all. With a strange smile he said something in his deep voice that made her blood run cold.

"But I'm to be a poor man myself in future, Glory. I've quarrelled with my father. I'm going into the Church."

It was a frightful blow to her, and the sun went down like a shot. But it burst open the bars of her cage for all that. After John Storm had found a curacy in London and taken Orders, he told them at Glenfaba that among his honorary offices was to be that of chaplain to a great West End hospital. This suggested to Glory the channel

of escape. She would go out as a hospital nurse. It was easier said than done, for hospital nursing was fashionable, and she was three years too young. With great labour she secured her appointment as probationer, and with greater labour still overcame the fear and affection of her grandfather. But the old parson was finally appeased when he heard that Glory's hospital was the same that John Storm was to be chaplain of, and that they might go up to London together.

III.

Dear Grandfather of Me and Everybody at Glenfaba,—Here I am at last, dear, at the end of my pilgrim's progress, and the evening and the morning are the first day. It is now eleven o'clock at night, and I am about to put myself to bed in my own little room at the hospital of Martha's Vineyard, Hyde Park, London, England.

The Captain was quite right; the morning was as fresh as his flattery, and before we got far beyond the Head most of the passengers were spread out below like the three legs of Man. Being an old sea-doggie myself, I didn't give it the chance to make me sick, but went downstairs and lay quiet in my berth, and deliberated great things. I didn't go up again until we got into the Mersey, and then the passengers were on deck, looking like sour butter-milk spilt out of the churn.

What a glorious sight! The ships, the docks, the towers, the town! I couldn't breathe for excitement until we got up to the landing-stage. Mr. Storm put me into a cab, and, for the sake of experience, I insisted on paying my own way. Of course, he tried to trick me; but a woman's a woman for a' that. As we drove up to Lime Street Station there befell—a porter. He carried my big

trunk on his head (like a mushroom), and when I bought my ticket, he took me to the train, while Mr. Storm went for a newspaper. Being such a stranger, he was very kind, so I flung the responsibility on Providence, and gave him sixpence.

There were two old ladies in the carriage beside ourselves, and the train we travelled by was an express. It was perfectly delightful, and for all the world like plunging into a stiff sou'-wester off the rocks at Contrary. But the first part of the journey was terrible. That tunnel nearly made me shriek. It was a misty day, too, at Liverpool, and all the way to Edge Hill they let off signals with a noise like battering-rams. My nerves were on the rack; so, taking advantage of the darkness of the carriage, I began to sing. That calmed me, but it nearly drove the old ladies out of their wits. *They* screamed if I didn't; and just as I was summoning the Almighty to attend to me a little in the middle of that inferno, out we came as innocent as a baby. There was another of these places just before getting into London; I suppose they are the purgatories through which you have to pass to get to these wonderful cities. Only if I had been consulted in the making of the Litany ("From sudden death, good Lord, deliver us"), I should have made an exception for people in tunnels.

You never knew what an absolute ninny Glory is! I was burning with such impatience to see London, that, when we came near it, I couldn't see anything for water under the brain. Approaching a great and mighty city for the first time must be like going into the presence of majesty. Only Heaven save me from such palpitation the day I become Songstress to the Queen!

Mercy! what a roar and boom—a deep murmur as of

ten hundred million million moths humming away on a still evening in autumn. On a nearer view it is more like a Tower of Babel concern with its click and clatter. The explosion of voices, the confused clamour, the dreadful disorder—cars, waggons, omnibuses—it makes you feel religious and rather cold down the back. What a needle in a haystack a poor girl must be here if there is nobody above to keep track of her!

Tell Aunt Rachel they are wearing another kind of bonnet in London—more pokey in front—and say if I see the Queen I'll be sure to tell her all about it.

We didn't get to the hospital until nine, so I've not seen much of it yet. The housekeeper gave me tea and told me I might go over the house as I wouldn't be wanted to begin duty before morning. So for an hour I went from ward to ward like a female Wandering Jew. Such silence! I'm afraid this hospital nursing is going to be a lock-jaw business. And now I'm going to bed—well, not homesick, you know, but just "longing a lil bit for all." To-morrow morning I'll waken up to new sounds and sights, and when I draw my blind I'll see the streets where the cars are for ever running and rattling. Then I'll think of Glenfaba and the birds singing and rejoicing.

Dispense my love throughout the island. Say that I love everybody just the same now I'm a London lady as when I was a mere provincial girl, and that when I'm a wonderful woman, and have brought the eyes of England upon me, I'll come back and make amends. I can hear what grandfather is saying: "Gough bless me, what a girl, though!" GLORY.

P.S.—I've not said much about Mr. Storm. He left me at the door of the hospital and went on to the house

of his vicar, for that is where he is to lodge, you know. On the way up I expended much beautiful poetry upon him on the subject of love. The old girlies having dozed off, I chanced to ask him if he liked to talk of it, but he said no, it was a profanation. Love was too sacred, it was a kind of religion. Sometimes it came unawares, sometimes it smouldered like fire under ashes, sometimes it was a good angel, sometimes a devil making you do things and say things, and laying your life waste like winter. But I told him it was just charming, and as for religion there was nothing under heaven like the devotion of a handsome and clever man to a handsome and clever woman, when he gave up all the world for her, and his body and his soul and everything that was his. I think he saw there was something in that, for though he said nothing, there came a wonderful light into his splendid eyes, and I thought if he wasn't going to be a clergyman —but no matter. So long, dear!

IV.

John Storm was the son of Lord Storm (a peer in his own right), and nephew of the Prime Minister of England, the Earl of Erin. Two years before John's birth the brothers had quarrelled about a woman. It was John's mother. She had engaged herself to the younger brother, and afterwards fallen in love with the elder one. The voice of conscience told her that it was her duty to carry out her engagement, and she did so. Then the voice of conscience took sides with the laws of life, and told the lovers they must renounce each other, and they both did that as well. But the poor girl found it easier to renounce life than love, and after flying to religion as an escape from the conflict between conjugal duty and elemental

passion, she gave birth to her child and died. She was the daughter of a rich banker, who had come from the soil, and she had been brought up to consider marriage distinct from love. Exchanging wealth for title, she found death in the deal.

Her husband had never stood in any natural affinity to her. On his part their marriage had been a loveless and selfish union, based on the desire for an heir that he might found a family and cancel the unfair position of a younger son. But the sin he committed against the fundamental law that marriage shall be founded only in love brought its swift revenge.

On hearing that the wife was dead the elder brother came to attend the funeral. The night before that event the husband felt unhappy about the part he had played. He had given no occasion for scandal, but he had never disguised, even from the mother of his son, the motives of his marriage. The poor girl was gone, he had only trained himself for the pursuit of her dowry, and the voice of love had been silent. Troubled by such thoughts, he walked about his room all night long, and somewhere in the first dead grey of dawn he went down to the death-chamber, that he might look upon her face again. Opening the door, he heard the sound of half-stifled sobs. Someone was leaning over the white face and weeping like a man with a broken heart. It was his brother.

From that time forward Lord Storm considered himself the injured person. He had never cared for his brother, and now he designed to wipe him out. His son would do it. He was the heir to the earldom, for the Earl had never married. But a posthumous revenge was too trivial. The Earl had gone into politics and was making a name. Lord Storm had missed his own opportunities, though he

had got himself called to the Upper House, but his son should be brought up to eclipse everything.

To this end the father devoted his life to the boy's training. All conventional education was wrong in principle. Schools and colleges and the study of the classics were drivelling folly, with next to nothing to do with life. Travel was the great teacher. "You shall travel as far as the sun," he said; so the boy was taken through Europe and Asia, and learned something of many languages. He became his father's daily companion, and nowhere the father went was it thought wrong for the boy to go also. Conventional morality was considered mawkish. The chief aim of home training was to bring children up in total ignorance, if possible, of the most important facts and functions of life. But it was *not* possible, and hence suppression, dissimulation, lying, and, under the ban of secret sin, one half the world's woe. So the boy was taken to the temples of Greece and India, and even to Western casinos and dancing-gardens. Before he was twenty he had seen something of nearly everything the world has in it.

When the time came to think of his career, England was in straits about her Colonial Empire. The vast lands over sea wanted to take care of themselves. It was the moment of the "British North America Act," and that gave the father his cue for action. While his brother the Earl was fiddling the country to the tune of limited self-government for Crown Colonies, the father of John Storm conceived the daring idea of breaking up the entire empire, including the United Kingdom, into self-governing states. They were to be the "United States of Great Britain."

This was to be John Storm's policy, and to work it out Lord Storm set up a house in the Isle of Man, where he might always look upon his plan in miniature. There

he established a bureau for the gathering of the data that his son would need to use hereafter. Newspapers came to him in his lonely retreat from all quarters of the globe, and he cut out everything relating to his subject. His library was a dusty room lined all round with brown paper packets which were labelled with the names of colonies and counties.

"It will take us two generations to do it, my boy, but we'll alter the history of England."

At fifty he was iron-grey and had a head like a big owl.

Meanwhile, the object of these grand preparations, the offspring of that loveless union, had a personality all his own. It seemed as if he had been built for a big man every way, and nature had been arrested in the making of him. When people looked at his head, they felt he ought to have been a giant, but he was far from rivalling the children of Anak. When they listened to his conversation, they thought he might turn out to be a creature of genius, but perhaps he was only a man of powerful moods. The best strength of body and mind seemed to have gone into his heart. It may be that the sorrowful unrest of his mother and her smothered passion had left their red stream in John Storm's soul.

When he was a boy, he would cry at a beautiful view in nature, at a tale of heroism, or at any sentimental ditty sung excruciatingly in the streets. Seeing a bird's nest that had been robbed of its eggs, he burst into tears; but when he came upon the bleeding, broken shells in the path, the tears turned to fierce wrath and mad rage, and he snatched up a gun out of his father's room, and went out to take the life of the offender.

On coming to the Isle of Man, he noticed, as often as he went to church, that a little, curly, red-headed girl

kept staring at him from the vicar's pew. He was a man of two-and-twenty, but the child's eyes tormented him. At any time of day or night he could call up a vision of their gleaming brightness. Then his father sent him to Canada to watch the establishment of the Dominion, and when he came back he brought a Canadian canoe and an American yacht, and certain democratic opinions.

The first time he sailed the yacht in Manx waters he sighted a disabled boat and rescued two children. One of them was the girl of the vicar's pew, grown taller and more winsome. She nestled up to him when he lifted her into the yacht, and without knowing why he kept his arms about her.

After that he called his yacht the *Gloria* in imitation of her name, and sometimes took the girl out on the sea. Notwithstanding the difference of the years between them, they had their happy boy and girl days together. In her white jersey and stocking cap she looked every inch a sailor. When the wind freshened and the boat plunged, she stood to the tiller like a man, and he thought her the sweetest sight ever seen in a cockpit; and when the wind saddened and the boom came aboard, she was the cheeriest companion in a calm. She sang, and so did he, and their voices went well together. Her favourite song was "Come, lasses and lads," his was "John Peel," and they would sing them off and on for an hour at a spell. Thus on a summer evening, when the bay was lying like a tired monster asleep, and every plash of an oar was echoing on the hills, the people on the land would hear them coming around the castle rock with their

> "D'ye ken John Peel, with his coat so gay?
> D'ye ken John Peel at the break of day?
> D'ye ken John P-e-e-l . . ."

For two years he amused himself with the child, and then realised that she was a child no longer. The pity of the girl's position took hold of him. This sunny soul, with her sportfulness, her grace of many gifts, with her eyes that flashed and gleamed like lightning, with her voice that was like the warble of a bird, this golden-headed gipsy, this witch, this fairy—what was the life that lay before her? Pity gave place to a different feeling, and then he was aware of a pain in the breast when he thought of the girl. As often as her eyes rested upon him he felt his face tingle and burn. He began to be conscious of an imprisoned side to his nature, the passionate side, and he drew back afraid. This wild power, this tempest, this raging fire within, God only knew whither it was to lead him. And then he had given a hostage to fortune, or his father had for him.

From his father's gloomy house at Knockaloe, where the winds were ever droning in the trees, he looked over to Glenfaba, and it seemed to him like a little white cloud lit up by the sunshine. His heart was for ever calling to the sunny spot over there, "Glory! Glory!" The pity of it was that the girl seemed to understand everything, and to know quite well what kept them apart. She flushed with shame that he should see her wearing the same clothes constantly, and with head aside and furtive glances she talked of the days when he would leave the island for good, and London would take him and make much of him, and he would forget all about his friends in that dead old place. Such talk cut him to the quick. Though he had seen a deal of the world, he did not know much about the conversation of women.

The struggle was brief. He began to wear plainer clothes—an Oxford tweed coat and a flannel shirt—to

talk about fame as an empty word, and to tell his father that he was superior to all stupid conventions.

His father sent him to Australia. Then the grown-up trouble of his life began. He passed through the world now with eyes open for the privations of the poor, and he saw everything in a new light. Unconsciously he was doing in another way what his mother had done when she flew to religion from stifled passion. He had been brought up as a sort of Imperialist-democrat, but now he bettered his father's instructions. England did not want more parliaments; she wanted more apostles. It was not by giving votes to a nation, but by strengthening the soul of a nation that it became great and free. The man for the hour was not he who revolved schemes for making himself famous, but he who was ready to renounce everything, and, if he was great, was willing to become little, and, if he was rich, to become poor. There was room for an apostle—for a thousand apostles—who, being dead to the world's glory, its money or its calls, were prepared to do all in Christ's spirit, and to believe that in the renunciation which was the "secret" of Jesus lay the only salvation remaining for the world.

He tramped through the slums of Melbourne and Sydney, and afterwards through the slums of London, returned to the Isle of Man a Christian Socialist, and announced to his father his intention of going into the Church.

The old man did not fume and fly out. He staggered back to his room like a bullock to its pen after it has had its death-blow in the shambles. In the midst of his dusty old bureau, with its labelled packets full of cuttings, he realised that twenty years of his life had been wasted. A son was a separate being, of a different growth, and a father was only the seed at the root that must decay and die.

Then he made some show of resistance.

"But with your talents, boy, surely you are not going to throw away your chances of a great name?"

"I care nothing for a great name, father," said John. "I shall win a greater victory than any that Parliament can give me."

"But, my boy, my dear boy! one must either be the camel or the camel-driver; and then society——"

"I hate society, and society would hate me. It is only for the sake of the few godly men that God spares it, as He spared Sodom for Lot's sake."

Having braved this ordeal and nearly broken the heart of his old father, he turned for his reward to Glory. He found her at her usual haunt on the headlands.

"I was blushing when you came up, wasn't I?" she said. "Shall I tell you why?"

"Why?"

"It was this," she said, with a sweep of her hand across her bosom.

He looked puzzled.

"Don't you understand? This old rag—it's the one I was wearing before you went away."

He wanted to tell her how well she looked in it—better than ever now that her bosom showed under its seamless curves and her figure had grown so lithe and shapely. But though she was laughing, he saw she was ashamed of her poverty, and he thought to comfort her.

"I'm to be a poor man myself in future, Glory. I've quarrelled with my father. I'm going to take Orders."

Her face fell. "Oh, I didn't think anybody would be poor who could help it. To be a clergyman is all right for a poor man, perhaps, but I hate to be poor; it's horrid."

Then darkness fell upon his eyes and he felt sad and sick. Glory had disappointed him. She was vain, she was worldly, she was incapable of the higher things; she would never know what a sacrifice he had made for her; she would think nothing of him now; but he would go on all the same, the more earnestly because the devil had drawn a bow at him and the arrow had gone in up to the feathers.

"With God's help I shall nail my colours to the mast." he said.

Thus he made up his mind to follow the unrolling of the scroll. He had the strength called character. The Church had been his beacon before, but now it was to be his refuge.

He found no difficulty in making the necessary preparations. For a year he read the Anglican divines—Jeremy Taylor, Hooker, Butler, Waterland, Pearson, and Pusey,—and when the time came for his ordination, his uncle, the Earl of Erin, who was now Prime Minister, obtained him a title to a curacy under the popular and influential Canon Wealthy, of All Saints', Belgravia. The Bishop of London gave letters dimissory to the Bishop of Sodor and Man, by whom he was examined and ordained.

On the morning of his departure for London, his father, with whom there had in the meantime been trying scenes, left him this final word of farewell: "As I understand that you intend to lead the life of poverty, I presume that you do not need your mother's dowry, and I shall hold myself at liberty to dispose of it elsewhere, *unless* you require it for the use of the young lady who is, I hear, to go up with you."

V.

"I WILL be a poor man among poor men," said John Storm to himself as he drove to his vicar's house in Eaton Place, but he awoke next morning in a bedroom that did not answer to his ideas of a life of poverty. A footman came with hot water and tea, and also a message from the Canon overnight, saying he would be pleased to see Mr. Storm in the study after breakfast.

The study was a sumptuous apartment immediately beneath, with soft carpets, on which his feet made no noise, and tiger-skins over the backs of chairs. As he entered it, a bright-faced man in middle life, clean shaven, wearing a gold-mounted pince-nez, and bubbling over with politeness, stepped forward to receive him.

"Welcome to London, my dear Mr. Storm. When the letter came from the Prime Minister I said to my daughter Felicity—you will see her presently—I trust you will be good friends—I said, 'It is a privilege, my child, to meet any wish of the dear Earl of Erin, and I am proud to be in at the beginning of a career that is sure to be brilliant and distinguished.'"

John Storm made some murmur of dissent.

"I trust you found your rooms to your taste, Mr. Storm?"

John Storm had found them more than he expected or desired.

"Ah, well, humble but comfortable, and in any case please regard them as your own, to receive whom you please therein, and to dispense your own hospitalities. This house is large enough. We shall not meet oftener than we wish, so we cannot quarrel. The only meal we need take together is dinner. Don't expect too much.

Simple but wholesome—that's all we can promise you in a clergyman's family."

John Storm answered that food was an indifferent matter to him, and that half-an-hour after dinner he never knew what he had eaten. The Canon laughed and began again.

"I thought it best you should come to us, being a stranger in London, though I confess I have never had but one of my clergy residing with me before. He is here now. You'll see him by-and-by. His name is Golightly, a simple, worthy young man, from one of the smaller colleges, I believe. Useful, you know, devoted to me and to my daughter, but of course a different sort of person altogether, and—er——"

It was a peculiarity of the Canon that whatever he began to talk about he always ended by talking of himself.

"I sent for you this morning (not having had the usual opportunity of a meeting before) that I might tell you something of our organisation and your own duties. . . . You see in me the head of a staff of six clergy."

John Storm was not surprised; a great preacher must be followed by flocks of the poor; it was natural that they should wish him to help them and to minister to them.

"We have no poor in my parish, Mr. Storm."

"No poor, sir?"

"On the contrary, her Majesty herself is one of my parishioners."

"That must be a great grief to you, sir?"

"Oh, the poor! Ah, yes, certainly. Of course we have our associated charities, such as the maternity home founded in Soho by Mrs. Callender—a worthy old Scotswoman, odd and whimsical, perhaps, but rich and influential. My clergy, however, have enough to do with

the various departments of our church work. For instance, there is the Ladies' Society, the Fancy Needlework classes, and the Decorative Flower Guild, not to speak of the daughter churches and the ministration in hospitals, for I always hold—er——"

John Storm's mind had been wandering, but at the mention of the hospital he looked up eagerly.

"Ah, yes, the hospital. Your own duties will be chiefly concerned with our excellent hospital of Martha's Vineyard. You will have the spiritual care of all patients and nurses—yes, nurses also—within its precincts, precisely as if it were your parish. 'This is my parish,' you will say to yourself, and treat it accordingly. Not yet being in full Orders, you will be unable to administer the sacrament, but you will have one service daily in each of the wards, taking the wards in rotation. There are seven wards, so there will be one service in each ward once a week, for I always say that fewer——"

"Is it enough?" said John. "I shall be only too pleased——"

"Ah, well, we'll see. On Wednesday evenings we have service in the church, and nurses not on night duty are expected to attend. Some fifty of them altogether, and rather a curious compound. Ladies among them? Yes, the daughters of gentlemen, but also persons of all classes. You will hold yourself responsible for their spiritual welfare. Let me see—this is Friday—say you take the sermon on Wednesday next, if that is agreeable. As to views, my people are of all shades of colour, so I ask my clergy to take strictly *via media* views—strictly *via media*. Do you intone?"

John Storm had been wandering again, but he recovered himself in time to say he did not.

"That is a pity; our choir is so excellent—two violins, a viola, clarinet, 'cello, double bass, the trumpets and drums, and of course the organ. Our organist himself——"

At that moment a young clergyman came into the room, making apologies and bowing subserviently.

"Ah, this is Mr. Golightly—the—h'm—Hon. and Rev. Mr. Storm. You will take charge of Mr. Storm, and bring him to church on Sunday morning.

Mr. Golightly delivered his message. It was about the organist. His wife had called to say that he had been removed to the hospital for some slight operation, and there was some difficulty about the singer of Sunday morning's anthem.

"Most irritating! Bring her up." The curate went out backwards. "I shall ask you to excuse me, Mr. Storm. My daughter, Felicity—ah, here she is."

A tall young woman in spectacles entered.

"This is our new housemate, Mr. Storm, nephew of dear Lord Erin. Felicity, my child, I wish you to drive Mr. Storm round and introduce him to our people, for I always say a young clergyman in London——"

John Storm mumbled something about the Prime Minister.

"Going to pay your respects to your uncle now? Very good and proper. Next week will do for the visits. Yes, yes. Come in, Mrs. Koenig."

A meek, middle-aged woman had appeared at the door. She was dark, and had deep luminous eyes with the moist look to be seen in the eyes of a tired old terrier.

"This is the wife of our organist and choir-master. Good day! Kindest greetings to the Prime Minister. . . . And by-the-way, let us say Monday for the beginning of your chaplaincy at the hospital."

The Earl of Erin, as First Lord of the Treasury, occupied the narrow, unassuming brick house which is the Treasury residence in Downing Street. Although the official head of the Church, with power to appoint its bishops and highest dignitaries, he was secretly a sceptic, if not openly a derider of spiritual things. For this attitude his early love-passage had been chiefly accountable. That strife between duty and passion which had driven the woman he loved to religion, had driven him in the other direction and left a broad swath of desolation in his soul. He had seen little of his brother since that evil time, and nothing whatever of his brother's son. Then John had written, "I am soon to be bound by the awful tie of the priesthood," and he had thought it necessary to do something for him. When John was announced he felt a thrill of tender feeling to which he had long been a stranger. He got up and waited. The young man with his mother's face and the eyes of an enthusiast was coming down the long corridor.

John Storm saw his uncle first in the spacious old Cabinet room which looks out on the little garden and the Park. He was a gaunt old man with meagre moustache and hair and a face like a death's-head. He held out his hand and smiled. His hand was cold and his smile was half tearful and half saturnine.

"You are like your mother, John."

John never knew her.

"When I saw her last you were a child in arms and she was younger than you are now."

"Where was that, uncle?"

"In her coffin, poor girl."

The Prime Minister shuffled some papers and said—

"Well, is there anything you wish for?"

"Nothing. I've come to thank you for what you've done already."

The Prime Minister made a deprecatory gesture.

"I almost wish you had chosen another career, John; still the Church has its opportunities and its chances, and if I can ever——"

"I am satisfied—more than satisfied," said John. "My choice is based, I trust, on a firm vocation. God's work is great, sir; and greatest of all in London. That is why I am so grateful to you. Think of it, sir!"

John was leaning forward in his chair, with one arm stretched out.

"Of the five millions of people in this vast city, not one million cross the threshold of church or chapel. And then remember their condition. A hundred thousand live in constant want, slowly starving to death every day and hour, and a quarter of the old people of London die as paupers. Isn't it a wonderful scene, sir? If a man is willing to be spiritually dead to the world—to leave family and friends—to go forth never to return, as one might go to his execution——"

The Prime Minister listened to the ardent young man who was talking to him there with his mother's voice, and then said—

"I'm sorry."

"Sorry?"

"I'm afraid I've made a mistake."

John Storm looked puzzled.

"I've sent you to the wrong place, John. When you wrote, I naturally supposed you were thinking of the Church as a career, and I tried to put you in the way of it. Do you know anything of your vicar?"

John knew that fame spoke of him as a great preacher

—one of the few who had passed through their Pentecost, and come out with the gift of tongues.

"Precisely!" The Prime Minister gave a bitter little laugh. "But let me tell you something about him. He was a poor curate in the country, where the lord of the manor chanced to be a lady. He married the lady of the manor. His wife died, and he bought a London parish. Then by the help of an old actor who gave lessons in elocution he—well, he set up his Pentecost. Since then he has been a fashionable preacher, and frequents the houses of great people. Ten years ago he was made an honorary canon, and when he hears of an appointment to a bishopric, he says in a tearful voice, 'I don't know what the dear Queen has got against me.'"

"Well, sir?"

"Well, if I had known you felt like that, I should scarcely have sent you to Canon Wealthy. And yet I hardly know where else a young man of your opinions . . . I'm afraid the Church has a good many Canon Wealthys in it."

"God forbid," said John. "No doubt there are Pharisees in these days just as in the days of Christ, but the Church is still the pillar of the State."

"The caterpillar, you mean, boy—eating out its heart and its vitals."

The Prime Minister gave another bitter little laugh, then looked quickly into John's flushed face and said—

"But it's poor work for an old man to sap away a young man's enthusiasm."

"You can't do that, uncle," said John, "because God is the absolute ruler of all things, good and bad, and He governs both to His glory. Let Him only give us strength to endure our exile——"

"I don't like to hear you talk like that, John. I think I know what the upshot will be. There's a gang of men about—Anglican Catholics they call themselves; well, remember the German proverb, 'Every priestling hides a popeling.' . . . And if you *are* to be in the Church, John, is there any reason why you shouldn't marry and be reasonable? To tell you the truth, I'm rather a lonely old man, whatever I may seem; and if your mother's son would give me a sort of a grandson—eh?"

The Prime Minister was pretending to laugh again.

"Come, John, come, it seems a pity—a fine young fellow like you, too. Are there no sweet young girls about in these days? Or are they all dead and gone since I was a young fellow? I could give you a wide choice, you know, for when a man stands high enough . . . in fact, you would find me reasonable—you might have anybody you liked, rich or poor, dark or fair——"

John Storm had been sitting in torment, and now he rose to go. "No, uncle," he said in a thicker voice, "I shall never marry. A clergyman who is married is bound to life by too many ties. Even his affection for his wife is a tie. And then there is her affection for the world, its riches, its praise, its honours——"

"Well, well, we'll say no more. After all, it's better than running wild, and that's what most young men seem to be doing now-a-days. But then your long education abroad, and your poor father left to look after himself! Good-day to you! Come and see me now and then. How like your mother you are sometimes! Good-day!"

When the door of the Cabinet room closed on John Storm the Prime Minister thought, "Poor boy, he's laying up for himself a big heart-ache one of these fine days."

And John Storm, going down the street with uncertain

step, said to himself, "How strange he should talk like that! But thank God, he didn't produce a flicker in me. I died to all that a year ago."

Then he lifted his head and his footstep lightened, and deep in some secret place the thought came proudly, "She shall see that to renounce the world is to possess the world—that a man may be poor and have all the kingdom of the world at his feet!"

He went back by the Underground from Westminster Bridge. It was mid-day and the train was crowded. His spirits were high and he talked with everyone near him. Getting out at Victoria he came upon his Vicar on the platform and saluted him rather demonstratively. The Canon responded with some restraint and then stepped into a first-class carriage.

On turning into Eaton Place he came upon a group of people standing around something that lay on the pavement. It was an old woman, a tattered, bedraggled creature, with a pinched and pallid face. "Is it an accident?" a gentleman was saying, and somebody answered, "No, sir, she's gorn off in a faint." "Why doesn't someone take her to the hospital?" said the gentleman, and then, like the Levite, he passed by on the other side. The butcher's cart drew up at the curb, and the butcher jumped down, saying, "There never *is* no p'lice about when they're wanted for anythink."

"But they aren't wanted here, friend," said somebody from the outside. It was John Storm, and he was pushing his way through the crowd.

"Will somebody knock at that door, please?" He lifted the old thing in his arms and carried her towards the Canon's house. The footman looked aghast. "Let

me know when the Canon returns," said John, and then marched up the carpeted stairs to his rooms.

An hour afterwards the old woman opened her eyes and said, "Anythink gorn wrong? Wot's up? Is it the work'us?"

It was a clear case of destitution and collapse. John Storm began to feed the old creature with the chicken and milk sent up for his own lunch.

Some time in the afternoon he heard the voice and step of the Vicar in the room below. Going down to the study, he was about to knock, but the voice continued in varying tones, now loud, now low. During a pause he rapped, and then with noticeable irritation the voice cried "Come in."

He found the Vicar, with a manuscript in hand, rehearsing his Sunday's sermon. It was a shock to John, but it helped him to understand what his uncle had said about the Canon's Pentecost.

The Canon's brow was clouded. "Ah, is it you? I was sorry to see you getting out of a third-class carriage to-day, Mr. Storm."

John answered that it was the poor man's class, and therefore, he thought, it ought to be his.

"You do yourself an injustice, Mr. Storm. Besides, to tell you the truth, I don't choose that my assistant clergy——"

John looked ashamed. "If that is your view, sir," he said, "I don't know what you'll say to what I've been doing since."

"I've heard of it, and I confess I'm not pleased. Whatever your old *protégée* may be, my house is no place for her. I help to maintain charitable institutions for such

cases, and I will ask you to lose no time in having her removed to the hospital."

John was crushed. "Very well, sir, if that is your wish; only I thought you said my rooms . . . Besides, the poor old thing fills her place as well as Queen Victoria, and perhaps the angels are watching the one as much as the other."

Next day John Storm called to see the old woman at Martha's Vineyard, and he saw the matron, the house-doctor, and a staff nurse as well. His adventure was known to everybody at the hospital. Once or twice he caught looks of amused compassion and heard a twitter of laughter. As he stood by the bed, the old woman muttered, "I knoo ez it wuzn't the work'us, my dear. He spoke to me friendly and squeedged my 'and."

Coming through the wards, he had looked for a face he could not see, but just then he was aware of a young woman, in the print dress and white apron of a nurse, standing in silence at the bed-head. It was Glory, and her eyes were wet with tears.

"You mustn't do such things," she said hoarsely; "I can't bear it," and she stamped her foot. "Don't you see that these people——"

But she turned about and was gone before he could reply. Glory was ashamed for him! Perhaps she had been taking his part! He felt the blood mounting to his face and his cheeks tingling. Glory! His eyes were swimming, and he dared not look after her, but he could have found it in his heart to kiss the old bag of bones on the bed.

That night he wrote to the parson in the island: "Glory has left off her home garments, and now looks more beautiful than ever in the white simplicity of the

costume of the nurse. Her vocation is a great one. God grant she may hold on to it." Then something about the fallacy of ceremonial religion and the impossibility of pleasing God by such religious formalities. "But if we have publicans and Pharisees now, even as they existed in Christ's time, all the more service is waiting for that man for whom life has no ambitions, death no terrors. I thank God I am in a great measure dead to these things.... I will fulfil my promise to look after Glory. My constant prayer is against Agag. It is so easy for him to get a foothold in a girl's heart here. This great new world, with its fashions, its gaieties, its beauty, and its brightness —no wonder if a beautiful young girl, tingling with life and ruddy health, should burn with impatience to fling herself into the arms of it. Agag is in London, and as insinuating as ever."

VI.

On Sunday morning his fellow-curate came to his room to accompany him to church. The Rev. Joshua Golightly was a little man with a hook nose, small, keen eyes, scanty hair, and a voice that was something between a whisper aud a whistle. He bowed subserviently, and made meek little speeches.

"I do trust you will not be disappointed with our church and service. We do all we can to make them worthy of our people."

As they walked down the streets he talked first of the church officers—there were honorary wardens, gentlemen sidesmen, and lady superintendents of floral decorations; then of the choir, which consisted of organist and choir-master, professional members, voluntary members, and choir secretary. The anthem was sung by a professional

singer, generally the tenor from the Opera; the Canon could always get such people—he was a great favourite with artistes and "the profession." Of course the singers were paid, and the difficulty this week had been due to the exorbitant fee demanded by the Italian baritone from Covent Garden.

Disappointment and disenchantment were falling on John Storm at every step.

All Saints' was a plain dark structure with a court-yard in front. The bells were ringing, and a line of carriages was drawing up at the portico as at the entrance to a theatre, discharging their occupants and passing on. Vergers in yellow and buff, with knee-breeches, silk stockings, and powdered wigs, were receiving the congregation at the doors.

"Let us go in by the west door—I should like you to see the screen to advantage," said Mr. Golightly.

The inside of the church was gorgeous. As far up as the clerestory every wall was frescoed, and every timber of the roof was gilded. At the chancel end there was a wrought-iron screen of delicate tracery, and the altar was laden with gold candle-sticks. Above the altar and at either side of it were stained-glass windows. The morning sun was shining through them, and filling the chancel with warm splashes of light. Ladies in beautiful spring dresses were following the vergers up the aisles.

"This way," the curate whispered, and John Storm entered the sacristy by a low doorway like the auditorium entrance to a stage. There he met some six others of his fellow-curates. They nodded to him and went on arranging their surplices. The choir were gathering in their own quarters, where the violins were tuning up, and the choir boys were laughing and behaving after their kind.

The bell slackened and stopped, and the organ began to play. When all were ready they stepped into a long corridor, and formed in line with their faces to the chancel and their backs to a little door at which a verger in blue stood guard.

"The Canon's room," whispered Mr. Golightly.

A prayer was said by someone, the choir sang the response, and then they walked in procession to their places in the chancel, the choir boys first, the Canon last. Seen through the tracery of the screen, the congregation appeared to fill every sitting in the church with a blaze of light and colour, and the atmosphere was laden with delicate perfume.

The service was choral. An anthem was sung at the close of the sermon, the collection being made during the hymn before it. The professional singer looked like any other chorister in his surplice, save for his swarthy face and heavy moustache.

The Canon preached. He wore his doctor's hood of scarlet cloth. His sermon was eloquent and literary, and it was delivered with elocutionary power. There were many references to great writers, painters, and musicians, including a panegyric on Michael Angelo and a quotation from Browning. The sermon concluded with a passage from Dante in the original.

John Storm was dazed and perplexed. When the service was over he came out alone, returning down the nave, which was now empty but still fragrant. Among other notices pasted on a board in the porch he found this one: "The Vicar and wardens, having learnt with regret that purses have been lost on leaving the church, recommend the congregation to bring only such money as they may need for the offertory."

Had he been to the house of God? No matter! God ruled the world in righteousness and wrought out everything to His own glory.

Next morning he began duty as chaplain at the hospital, and when he had finished the reading of his first prayers he could see that he had lived down some of the derision due to his adventure with the old woman. That poor old bag of bones was sinking and could not last much longer.

Going out by way of the dispensary, he saw Glory again, and heard that she had been to church the day before. It was lovely. All those hundreds of nice-looking people in gay colours, with the rustle of silk and the hum of voices—it was beautiful—it reminded her of the sea in summer. He asked what she thought of the sermon, and she said, "Well, it wasn't religion exactly—not what I call religion—not a 'reg'lar rousing rampage for sowls,' as old Chalse used to say, but——"

"Glory," he said impetuously, "I'm to preach my first sermon on Wednesday."

He did not ask her to come, but inquired if she was on night duty. She answered "no," and then somebody called her.

"She'll be there," he told himself, and he walked home with uplifted head. He would look for her; he would catch her eye; she would see that it was not necessary to be ashamed of him again.

And then close behind, very close, came recollections of her appearance. He could reconstruct her new dress by memory—her face was easy to remember. "After all, beauty is a kind of virtue," he thought; "and all natural friendship is good for the progress of souls if it is built upon the love of God."

He wrote nothing and learned nothing by heart. The only preparation he made for his sermon was thought and prayer. When the Wednesday night came he was very nervous. But the church was nearly empty, and the vergers, who were in their everyday clothes, had only partially lit up the nave. The Canon had done him the honour to be present; his fellow-curates read the prayers and lessons.

As he ascended the pulpit he thought he saw the white bonnets of a group of nurses in the dim distance of one of the aisles, but he did not see Glory, and he dared not look again. His text was "My kingdom is not of this world." He gave it out twice, and his voice sounded strange to himself—so weak and thin in that hollow place.

When he began to speak, his sentences seemed awkward and difficult. The things of the world were temporal, and the nations of the world were out of harmony with God. Men were biting and devouring each other who ought to live as brothers. "Cheat or be cheated," was the rule of life, as a modern philosopher had said. On the one side were the many dying of want, on the other side the few occupied with poetry and art, writing addresses to flowers, and peddling in the portraiture of the moods and methods of love, living lives of frivolity, taking pleasure in mere riches and the lusts of the eye, while thousands of wretched mortals were grovelling in the mire. . . . Then where was our refuge? . . . The Church was the refuge of God's people . . . from Christ came the answer—the answer—the——"

His words would not flow. He fought hard, threw out another passage, then stammered, began again, stammered again, felt hot, made a fresh effort, flagged, rattled out some words he had fixed in his mind, perspired, lost

his voice, and finally stopped in the middle of a sentence and said, "And now to God the Father—" and came down from the pulpit.

His sermon had been a failure, and he knew it. On going back to the sacristy the Reverend Golightly congratulated him with a simper and a vapid smile. The Canon was more honest but more vain. He mingled lofty advice with gentle reproof. Mr. Storm had taken his task too lightly. Better if he had written his sermon and read it. Whatever might serve for the country, congregations in London—at All Saints' especially—expected culture and preparation.

"For my own part I confess—nay, I am proud to declare—my watchword is Rehearse! Rehearse! Rehearse!"

As for the doctrine of the sermon it was not above question. It was necessary to live in the *nineteenth* century, and it was impossible to apply to its conditions the rules of life that had been proper to the first.

John Storm made no resistance. He slept badly that night. As often as he dozed off he dreamt that he was trying to do something he could not do, and when he awoke, he became hot as with the memory of a disgrace. And always at the back of his shame was the thought of Glory.

Next morning he was alone in his room and fumbling the toast on his breakfast-table, when the door opened and a cheery voice cried, "May I no come in, laddie?"

An elderly lady entered. She was tall and slight, and had a long fine face with shrewd but kindly eyes and nearly snow-white hair.

"I'm Jane Callender," she said, "and I couldna wait for an introduction or sic bother, but must just come and see ye. Ay, laddie, it was a bonnie sermon yon! I

havena heard the match of it since I came frae Edinburgh and sat under the good Doctor Guthrie. Now *he* was nae slavish reader neither—none of your paper preachers was Thomas. My word, but you gave us the right doctrine, too! They're given over to the worship of Beelzebub—half these church-going folks. Oh, these Pharisees! They are enough to sour milk. I wish they had one neck, and somebody would just squeeze it. Now, where did you hear that, Jane? But no matter! And the lasses are worse than the men, with their fashions and foldololls. They love Jesus, but they like Him best in heaven, not bothering down in Belgravia. But I must be going my ways. I left James on the street, and there's no living with the man if you keep his horses waiting. Good morning till ye! . . . But eh, laddie, I'm afraid for ye: I'm thinking—I'm thinking . . . but come and see me at Victoria Square. Good morning!"

She had rattled this off at a breath, and had hardly given time for a reply when her black silk was rustling down the stairs.

John Storm remembered that the Canon had spoken of her. She was the good woman who kept the home for girls at Soho.

"The good creature only came to comfort me," he thought. But Glory! What was Glory thinking? That morning, after prayers at the hospital, he went in search of her in the out-patient department, but she pretended to be overwhelmed with work, and only nodded and smiled and excused herself.

"I haven't got a moment this morning, either for the king or his dog. I'm up to my eyes in bandages, and have fourteen plasters on my conscience, and now I must

run away to my little boy whose leg was amputated on Saturday."

He understood her, but he came back in the evening and was resolved to face it out.

"What did you think of last night, Glory?" Then she put on a look of blank amazement.

"Why, what happened? Oh, of course—the sermon! How stupid of me! Do you know I forgot all about it?"

"You were not there, then?"

"Don't ask me. Really, I'm ashamed. After my promise to grandfather, too! But Wednesday doesn't count anyway, does it? You'll preach on Sunday . . . and then!"

His feeling of relief was followed by a sense of deeper humiliation. Glory had not even troubled herself to remember. Evidently he was nothing to her—nothing; while she——

He walked home through St. James's Park. Under the tall trees the peaceful silence of the night came down on him. The sharp clack of the streets was deadened to a low hum as of the sea afar off. Across the gardens he could see the clock in the tower of Westminster, and hear the great bell strike the quarters. London! How little and selfish all personal thoughts were in the contemplation of the mighty city! He had been thinking only of himself and his own little doings. It was all so small and pitiful.

"Did my shame at my failure in the pulpit proceed solely from fear of losing the service of God, or did it proceed from wounded ambition, from pride, from thoughts of Glory——"

But the peaceful stars were over him. It was a majestic night.

VII.

DEAR AUNTIE RACHEL,—Tell grandpa, to begin with, that John Storm preached his first sermon on Wednesday last, and according to programme I was there to hear it. Oh, God bless me, what a time I had of it! He broke down in the middle, taking stage fright or pulpit fright, or some such devilry, though there was nothing to be afraid of except a bandboxful of chattering girls who didn't listen, and a few old fogies with ear-trumpets. I was sitting in the darkness at the back, effectually concealed from the preacher by the broad shoulders of Ward Sister Allworthy, who is an example of "delicate femalism" just verging on old-maidenism. They tell me the "discoorse" was a short one, but I never got so many prayers into the time in all my born days, and my breath was coming and going so fast that the Sister must have thought they had set up a pumping engine in the pew behind her. Our poor heavy-laden Mr. Storm has been here since then with his sad and eager face, but I hadn't the stuff in me to tell him the truth about the sermon, so I told him I had forgotten to go and hear it, and may the Lord have mercy on my soul!

You want to know how I employ my time? Well, lest you should think I give up my days to dreams and my nights to idleness, I hasten to tell that I rise at 6, breakfast at 6.30, begin duty at 7, sup at 9.30 P.M., gossip till ten, and then go into my room and put myself to bed; and there I am at the end of it. Being only a probationer, I am chiefly in the out-patient department, where my duties are to collect the things wanted at the dispensary, make the patients ready to see the surgeon and pass them on to the dressers. My patients at present are the chil-

dren, and I love them, and shall break my heart when I have to leave them. They are not always too well looked after by the surgeon, but that doesn't matter in the least, because, you see, they are constantly watched by the best and most learned doctor in the world—that's me.

Last Saturday I had my first experience of the operating theatre. Gracious goodness! I thought I shouldn't survive it. Fortunately I had my dressings and sponges to look after, so I just stiffened my back with a sort of imaginary six-foot steel bar, and went on "like blazes." But some of these staff nurses are just "ter'ble"; they take a professional pleasure in descending to that Inferno, and wouldn't miss a "theatre" for worlds. On Saturday it was a little boy of five who had his leg amputated, and now when you ask the white-faced darling where he's going to, he says he's going to the angels, and he'll get lots of gristly pork up there. He *is* too.

The *personnel* of our vineyard is abundant, but there are various sour grapes about. We have a medical school (containing lots of nice boys, only a girl may not speak to them even in the corridors), and a full staff of honorary and visiting physicians and surgeons. But the only doctor we really have much to do with is the house-surgeon, a young fellow who has just finished his student's course. His name is Abery, and since Saturday he has so much respect for Glory that she might even swear in his presence (in Manx), but Sister Allworthy takes care that she doesn't, having designs on his celibacy herself. He must have sung his *Te Deum* after the operation, for he got gloriously drunk, and wanted to inject morphia in a patient recovering from trouble of the kidney. It was an old hippopotamus of a German musician named Koenig, and he was in frantic terror. So I whispered to him to pretend

to go to sleep, and then I told the doctor I had lost the syringe. But—"Gough bless me sowl!"—what a dressing the Sister gave me!

Yesterday was visiting-day, and when the friends of the patients come, even an hospital can have its humours. They try to sneak in little dainties, which may be delicious in themselves, but are deadly poison for the people they are intended for. Then we have to search under the bed-clothes of the patients and even feel the pockets of their visitors. The mother of my little boy came yesterday, and I noticed such a large protuberance at her bosom under her ulster that I began to foresee another operation. It was only a brick of currant cake paved with lemon peel. I hauled it out and moved round like a cloud of thunder and lightning. But she began to cry and to say she had made it herself for Johnnie, and then —well, didn't I just get a wigging from the Sister though!

But I don't mind what happens here, for I am in London, and to be in London is to live, and to live is to be in London. I've not seen much of it yet, having only two hours off duty every day, from ten to twelve, and then all I can do is to make little dips into the Park and the district round about, like a new pigeon with its wings clipped. But I watch the great new world from my big box up here, and see the carriages in the Park, and the people riding on horseback. They have a new handshake in London. You lift your hand to the level of your shoulder, and then waggle horizontally as if you had put your elbow out; and when you begin to speak you say, "I—er," as if you had got the mumps. But it is beautiful! The sound of the traffic is like music, and I feel like a war-horse that wants to be marching to it. How delightful it

is to be young in a world so full of loveliness! And if you are not very ugly, it's none the worse.

All hospital nurses are just now basking in the sunshine of a forthcoming ball. It is to be given at Bartimæus's Hospital, where they have a lecture-theatre larger than the common, and the dancing there is for once to be to a happier tune. All the earth is to be present—all the hospital earth; and if I could afford to array myself in the necessary splendour, I should show this benighted London what an absolute angel Glory is! But then my first full holiday is to be on the 24th, when I expect to be out from 10 A.M. until 10 P.M. I am nearly crazy whenever I think of it; and when the time comes to make my first plunge into London, I know I shall hold my breath exactly as if I were taking a header off Creg Malin Rocks. . . . GLORY.

VIII.

ON the morning of the 24th Glory rose at five, that she might get through her work and have the entire day for her holiday. At that hour she came upon a rough-haired nurse, wearing her cap a little on one side, and washing a floor with disinfectants. Being in great spirits, Glory addressed her cheerfully.

"Are you off to-day, too?" she said.

The nurse gave her a contemptuous glance, and answered—

"I'm not one of your paying probationers, miss—playing probationers, *I* call them. We nurses are hard-working women, whose life spells duty, and we've got no time for sight-seeing and holiday-making."

"No, but you are one of those who ruin the profession altogether," said a younger woman who had just come up.

"They will expect everybody to do the same. This is my day off, but I have to do the grate, and sweep the ward, and make the bed, and tidy the Sister's room; and it's all through people like you. Small thanks you get for it either, for a girl may not even wear her hair in a fringe, and she is always expecting to hear the matron's, 'You're not fit for nursing, miss.'"

Glory looked at her. She was an exquisitely pretty girl, with dark hair, pink and ivory cheeks, and light grey eyes, but her hands were coarse, and her finger-nails flat and square; and when you looked again there was a certain blemished appearance about her beauty as of a Sèvres vase that is cracked somewhere.

"Do you say you are off to-day?" said Glory.

"Yes, I am; are you?"

"Yes, but I am strange to London. Could you take me with you, if you are going nowhere in particular?"

"Certainly, dear. I've noticed you before, and wanted to speak to you. You're the girl with the splendid name—Glory, isn't it?"

"Yes; what is yours?"

"Polly Love."

At ten o'clock that morning the two girls set out for their long day's jaunt.

"Now, where shall we go?" said Polly.

"Let us go where we can see a great many people," said Glory.

"That's easy enough, for this is the Queen's birthday, and——"

Glory thought of Aunt Rachel, and made a cry of delight.

"And now that I think of it," said Polly, as if by a

sudden memory, "I've got tickets for the trooping of the colours—the Queen's colours, you know."

"Shall we see her?" said Glory.

"What a question! Why, no; but we'll see the soldiers and the generals, and perhaps the Prince. It's at 10.30, and only across the Park."

"Come along," said Glory; and she began to drag at her companion and to run.

"My gracious, what a girl you are, to be sure!"

But they were both running in another minute, and laughing and chattering like children escaped from school. In a quarter of an hour they were at the entrance to the Horse Guards. There was a crowd at the gates, and a policeman was taking tickets. Polly dived into her pocket.

"Where are mine? Oh, here they are. A great friend gave me them," she whispered. "He has a chum in one of those offices."

"A gentleman?" said Glory with studied politeness; but they were crushing through the gate by that time, and thereafter she had eyes and ears for nothing but the pageant before her.

It was a beautiful morning, and the spring foliage of the Park was very green and fresh. Three sides of the great square were lined with redcoats; the square itself was thronged with people, and every window and balcony looking over it was filled. There were soldiers, sentries, policemen, the generals in cocked hats, and the Prince himself in a bearskin, riding by with the jingle of spurs and curb-chain. Then the ta-ra-ta-ta-ra of the bugle, the explosive voice crying "Escort for the colour," the officer carrying it, the white gloves of the staff fluttering up the salute, the flash of bayonets, the march round, and the

band playing "The British Grenadiers." It was like a dream to Glory. She felt her bosom heaving and was afraid she was going to cry.

Polly was laughing and prattling merrily. "Ha, ha, ha! see that soldier chasing a sunshade? My! he has caught it with his sword."

"I suppose these are all great people," whispered Glory.

"I should think so," said Polly. "Do you see that gentleman in the window opposite?—that's the Foreign Office."

"Which?" said Glory, but her eyes were wandering.

"The one in the frock-coat and the silk hat talking to the lady in the green lawn and the black lace fichu and the spring bonnet."

"You mean beside that plain girl wearing the jungle of rhododendrons?"

"Yes; that's the gentleman who gave my friend the tickets."

Glory looked at him for a moment, and something very remote seemed to stir in her memory, but the band was playing once more and she was wafted away again. It was "God Save the Queen" this time, and when it ended and everybody cried "All over," she took a long, deep breath and said, *"Well!"*

Polly was laughing at her, and Glory had to laugh also. They set each other off laughing, and people began to look at them, and then they had to laugh again and run away.

"This Glory is the funniest girl," said Polly; "she is surprised at the simplest thing."

They went to look at the shops, passing up Regent Street, across the Circus, and down Oxford Street towards

the City, laughing and talking nonsense all the time. Once when they made a little purchase at a shop the shop-woman looked astonished at the freedom with which they carried themselves, and after that they felt inclined to go into every shop in the street and behave absurdly every-where. In the course of two hours they had accomplished all the innocent follies possible to the intoxication of youth, and were perfectly happy.

By this time they had reached the Bank and were feeling the prickings of hunger, so they looked out a restaurant in Cheapside and went in for some dinner. The place was full of men, and several of them rose at once when the two girls entered. They were in the out-door hospital costume, but there was something showy about Polly's toilet, and the men kept looking their way and smiling. Glory looked back boldly, and said in an audible voice, "What fun it must be to be a barmaid, and to have the gentlemen wink at you, and be laughing back at them!" But Polly nudged her and told her to be quiet. She looked down herself, but nevertheless con-trived to use her eyes as a kind of furtive electric battery in the midst of the most innocent conversation. It was clear that Polly had flown farthest in the ways of the world, and when you looked at her again you could see that the balance of her life had been deranged by someone.

After dinner the girls got into an omnibus and went still farther east, sitting at opposite sides of the car, and laughing and talking loudly to each other amid the astonish-ment of the other occupants. But when they came to mean and ugly streets with greengrocers' barrows by the curbstone, and weird and dreary cemeteries in the midst of gaunt green sticks that were trying to look like trees, Glory thought they had better return.

They went back by the Thames steamboat from some landing-stage among the docks. The steamer picked up passengers at every station on the river, and at London Bridge a band came aboard. As they sailed under St. Paul's the boat was crowded with people going west to see the celebrations in honour of the birthday, and the band was playing "And her golden hair was hanging down her back."

At one moment Glory was wild with delight, and at the next her gaiety seemed to be suddenly extinguished. The sun was setting behind the towers of Westminster in a magnificent lake of fire, and it seemed like the sun going down at Peel, except that the lights beneath, which glistened and flashed, were windows, not waves, and the deep hum was not the noise of the mighty sea, but the noise of mighty millions.

They landed at Westminster Bridge and went to a tea-room for tea. When they came out it was quite dark, and they got on to the top of an omnibus. But the town was now ablaze with gas and electric lights that were flinging out the initials of the Queen, and Whitehall was dense with carriages going to the official receptions. Glory wanted to be in the midst of so much life, so the girls got down and walked arm in arm.

As they passed through Piccadilly Circus they were laughing again, for the oppression of the crowds made them happy. The throng was greatest at that point and they had to push their way through. Among others, there were many gaily-dressed women who seemed to be waiting for omnibuses. Glory noticed that two of these women, who were grimacing and lisping, had spoken to a man who was also lounging about. She tugged at Polly's arm.

"That's strange! Did you see that?" she said.

"That! Oh, that's nothing. It's done every day," said Polly.

"What does it mean?" said Glory.

"Why, you don't mean to say . . . Well, this Glory . . . Really your friends ought to take care of you, my dear, you are so ignorant of the world."

And then suddenly, as by a flash of lightning, Glory had her first glimpse of the tragic issues of life.

"Oh, my gracious! come along," she whispered, and dragged Polly after her.

They were panting past the end of St. James's Street, when a man with an eyeglass and a great shield of shirt-front collided with them and saluted them. Glory was for forging ahead, but Polly had drawn up.

"It's only my friend," said Polly in another voice. "This is a new nurse. Her name is Glory."

The man said something about a glorious name and a glorious pleasure to be nursed by such a nurse, and then both the girls laughed. He was glad they had found his tickets useful, but sorry he could not see them back to the hospital, being dragged away to the bally Foreign Office reception in honour of the Queen's birthday.

"But I'm coming to the ball, you know, and," with a glance at Glory, "I've half a mind to bring my chum along with me."

"Oh, do," said Polly, partly covering the pupils of her eyes with her eyelids.

The man lowered his voice and said something about Glory which Glory did not catch, then waved his white kid glove, saying "Ta-ta," and was gone.

"Is he married?" said Glory.

"Married! Good gracious, no; what ridiculous ideas you've got!"

It was ten minutes after ten as the girls turned in at a sharp trot at the door of the hospital, still prattling and chattering and bringing some of the gaiety and nonsense of their holiday into the quiet precincts of the house of pain. The porter shook his finger at them with mock severity, and a ward Sister going through the porch in her white silence stopped to say that a patient had been crying out for one of them.

"It's me—I know it's me," said Polly. "I've got a brother here out of a monastery, and he can't do with anybody else about him. It makes me tired of my life."

But it was Glory who was wanted. The woman whom John Storm had picked up out of the streets was dying. Glory had helped to nurse her, and the poor old thing had kept herself alive that she might deliver to Glory her last charge and message. She could see nobody, so Glory leaned over the bed and spoke to her.

"I'm here, mammie; what is it?" she said, and the flushed young face bent close above the withered and white one.

"He spoke to me friendly and squeedged my 'and, he did. S'elp me never, it's true. Gimme a black cloth on the corfin, my dear, and mind yer tell 'im to foller."

"Yes, mammie, yes; I will—be sure I—I—— Oh!"

It was Glory's first death.

IX.

John Storm had been through his first morning call that afternoon. For this ordeal he had presented himself in a flannel shirt in the hall, where the Canon was waiting for him in patent-leather boots and kid gloves, and his daughter Felicity in cream silk and white feathers. After they had seated themselves in the carriage, the

Canon said, "You don't quite do yourself justice, Mr. Storm. Believe me, to be well dressed is a great thing to a young man making his way in London."

The carriage stopped at a house that seemed to be only round the corner.

"This is Mrs. Macrae's," the Canon whispered. "An American lady—widow of a millionaire. Her daughter—you will see her presently—is to marry into one of our best English families."

They were walking up the wide staircase behind the footman in blue. There was a buzz of voices coming from a room above.

"Canon—er—Wealthy, Miss Wealthy, and—er—the h'm . . . Rev. Mr. Storm!"

The buzz of voices abated, and a bright-faced little woman, showily dressed, came forward and welcomed them with a marked accent. There were several other ladies in the room, but only one gentleman. This person, who was standing, with teacup and saucer in hand, at the farther side, screwed an eyeglass in his eye, looked across at John Storm, and then said something to the lady in the chair beside him. The lady tittered a little. John Storm looked back at the man, as if by an instinctive certainty that he must know him when he saw him again. He was engulfed in a high, stiff collar, and was rather ugly; tall, slender, a little past thirty; fair, with soft, sleepy eyes, and no life in his expression, but agreeable; fit for good society, with the stamp of good-breeding, and capable of saying little humorous things in a thin "roofy" voice.

"I was real sorry I didn't hear Mr. Storm Wednesday evening," Mrs. Macrae was saying with a mincing smile. "My daughter told me it was just too lovely. Mercy, this

is your great preacher. Persuade him to come to my 'At Home' Tuesday."

A tall, dark girl, with gentle manners and a beautiful face, came slowly forward, put her hand into John's, and looked steadily into his eyes without speaking. Then the gentleman with the eyeglass said suavely, "Have you been long in London, Mr. Storm?"

"Two weeks," John answered shortly, and half turned his head.

"How—er—interesting!" with a prolonged drawl and a little cold titter.

"Oh, Lord Robert Ure—Mr. Storm," said the hostess.

"Mr. Storm has done me the honour to become one of my assistant clergy, Lord Robert," said the Canon, "but he is not likely to be a curate long."

"That is charming," said Lord Robert. "It is always a relief to hear that I am likely to have one candidate the less for my poor perpetual curacy in Pimlico. They're at me like flies round a honey-pot, don't you know. I thought I had made the acquaintance of all the perpetual curates in Christendom. And what a sweet team they are, to be sure! The last of them came yesterday. I was out, and my friend Drake—Drake of the Home Office, you know—couldn't give the man the living, so he gave him sixpence instead, and the creature went away quite satisfied."

Everybody seemed to laugh except John (who only stared into the air), and the loudest laughter came from the Canon. But suddenly an incisive voice said—

"But why sharpen your teeth on the poor curates? Is there no a canon or a bishop handy that's better worth a bite?"

It was Mrs. Callender.

"I'll tell ye a story too, only *mine* shall be a true one."

"Jane! Jane!" said the hostess, shaking her fan as a weapon; and Lord Robert stretched his neck over his collar and made an amiable smile.

"A girl of eighteen came to me this morning at Soho, and she was in the usual trouble. The father was a wicked rector. He died last year leaving thirty-one thousand pounds, and the mother of his unfortunate child, that is to say his mistress, is now in the Union."

It was the first sincere word that had been spoken, where every tone had been wrong, every gesture false, and it fell on the company like a thunderclap. John Storm drew his breath hard, looked up at Lord Robert by a strange impulse, and felt himself avenged.

"What a beautiful day it has been," said somebody.

Everybody looked up at the maker of this surprising remark. It was a lady, and she blushed until her cheeks burned again.

A painful silence followed, and then the hostess turned to Lord Robert and said—

"You spoke of your friend Drake, didn't you? Everybody is talking of him, and as for the girls they seem to be crazy about the man. So handsome, they say, so natural, and such a splendid talker. But then girls are so quick to take fancies to people. You really must take care of yourself, my dear." (This to Felicity.) "Who is he? Lord Robert will tell you—an official of some kind, and son of Sir something Drake of one of the northern counties. He knows the secret of getting on in the world, though—he doesn't go about too much. But I've determined not to live any longer without making the acquaintance of this wonderful being, so Lord Robert must just bring him along Tuesday evening or else——"

John Storm escaped at last, without promising to come to the "At Home." He went direct to the hospital, and learned that Glory was out for the day. Where she could have gone, and what she could be doing, puzzled him grievously. That she had not put herself under his counsel and direction on her first excursion abroad hurt his pride and wounded his sense of responsibility. As the night fell his anxiety increased. Though he knew she would not return until ten he set out at nine to meet her.

At a venture he took the eastward course, and passed slowly down Piccadilly. The façade of nearly every club facing the Park was flaming with electric light. Young men in evening dress were standing on the steps, smoking, and taking the air after dinner, and pretty girls in showy costumes were promenading leisurely in front of them. Sometimes as a girl passed she looked sharply up, and the corner of her mouth would be raised a little, and when she had gone by there would be a general burst of laughter.

John's blood boiled, and then his heart sank; he felt so helpless, his pity and indignation were so useless and unnecessary. All at once he saw what he had been looking for. As he went by the corner of St. James's Street, he almost ran against Glory and another nurse in the costume of their hospital. They did not observe him, they were talking to a man; it was the man he had met in the afternoon, Lord Robert Ure.

John heard the man say, "Your Glory is such a glorious——" and then he lowered his voice, and appeared to say something that was very amusing, for the other girl laughed a great deal.

John's soul was now fairly in revolt, and he wanted to stop, to order the man off and to take charge of the

two nurses, as his duty seemed to require of him. But he passed them, then looked back and saw the group separate, and as the man went by he watched the girls going westward. There was a glimpse of them under the gas-lamp as they crossed the street, and again a glimpse as they passed into the darkness under the trees of the Park.

He could not trust himself to return to the hospital that night, and his indignation was no less in the morning. But there was a letter from Glory saying that his poor old friend was dead, and had begged that he would bury her. He dressed himself in his best ("We can't take liberties with the poor," he thought) and walked across to the hospital at once. There he asked for Glory, and they went downstairs together to that chill chamber underground which has always its cold and silent occupant. It is only a short tenancy that anybody can have there, so the old woman had to be buried the same morning. The parish was to bury her, and the van was at the door.

He was standing with Glory in the hall, and his heart had softened to her.

"Glory," he said, "you shouldn't have gone out yesterday without telling me—the dangers of London are so great."

"What dangers?" she asked.

"Well, to a young girl, a beautiful girl——"

Glory peered up under her long eyelashes.

"I mean the dangers from—I'm ashamed in my soul to say it—the dangers from men."

She shot up a quick glance into his face and said in a moment, "You saw us, didn't you?"

"Yes, I saw you, and I didn't like your choice of company."

She dropped her head demurely and said, "The man?"

John hesitated. "I was speaking of the girl. I don't like the freedom with which she carries herself in this house. Among these good and devoted women is there no one but this . . . this——"

Glory's lower lip began to show its inner side. "She's bright and lively—that's all I care."

"But it's not all *I* care, Glory, and if such men as that are her friends outside——"

Glory's head went up. "What is it to me who are her friends outside?"

"Everything, if you allow yourself to meet them again."

"Well," doggedly, "I *am* going to meet them again. I'm going to the nurses' ball on Tuesday."

John answered with deliberation, "Not in that girl's company."

"Why not?"

"I say *not* in that girl's company."

There was a short pause, and then Glory said with a quivering mouth, "You are vexing me, and you will end by making me cry. Don't you see you are degrading me too? I am not used to being degraded. You see me with a weak silly creature who hasn't an idea in her head, and can do nothing but giggle and laugh and make eyes at men, and you think I'm going to be led away by her. Do you suppose a girl can't take care of herself?"

"As you will, then," said John, with a fling of his hand, going off down the steps.

"Mr. Storm—Mr. Storm—Jo—Joh——"

But he was out on the pavement and getting into the work-house van.

"Ah!" said a mincing voice beside her. "How jolly it is when anybody is suffering for your sake!" It was

Polly Love, and again her eyelids were half covering her eyes.

"I'm sure I don't know what you mean," said Glory; her own eyes were swimming in big tear-drops.

"Don't you? What a funny girl you are! But your education has been neglected, my dear."

It was a combination van and hearse with the coffin under the driver's box, and John Storm (as the only discoverable mourner) with the undertaker on the seat inside.

"Will ye be willin' ter tyke the service at the cimitery, sir?" said the undertaker, and John answered that he would.

The grave was on the paupers' side, and when the undertaker, with his man, had lowered the coffin to its place, he said, "They've gimme abart three more funerals this morning, so I'll leave ye now, sir, to finish 'er off."

At the next moment John Storm in his surplice was alone with the dead, and had opened his book to read the burial service which no other human ear was to hear.

He read "Dust to dust, ashes to ashes," and then the bitter loneliness of the pauper's doom came down on his soul and silenced him.

But his imprisoned passion had to find a vent, and that night he wrote to the Prime Minister: "I begin to understand what you meant when you said I was in the wrong place. Oh, this London, with its society, its worldly clergy, its art, its literature, its luxury, its idle life, all built on the toil of the country and compounded of the sweat of the nameless poor! Oh, this "Circe of cities," drawing good people to it, decoying them, seducing them, and then turning them into swine! It seems impossible to live in the world and to be spiritually-minded. When I try to do so I am torn in two."

X.

On the following Tuesday evening two young men were dining in their chambers in St. James's Street. One of them was Lord Robert Ure; the other was his friend and house-mate, Horatio Drake. Drake was younger than Lord Robert by some seven or eight years, and also beyond comparison more attractive. His face was manly and handsome, its expression was open and breezy; he was broad-shouldered and splendidly built, and he had the fair hair and blue eyes of a boy.

Their room was a large one, and it was full of beautiful and valuable things, but the furniture was huddled about in disorder. A large chamber-organ, a grand piano, a mandoline and two violins, pictures on the floor as well as on the walls, many photographs scattered about everywhere, and the mirror over the mantelpiece fringed with invitation cards, which were stuck between the glass and the frame.

Their man had brought in the coffee and cigarettes. Lord Robert was speaking in his weary drawl, which had the worn-out tone of a man who had made a long journey and was very sleepy.

"Come, dear boy, make up your mind, and let us be off."

"But I'm tired to death of these fashionable routs."

"So am I."

"They're so unnatural—so unnecessary."

"My dear fellow, of course they're unnatural—of course they're unnecessary; but what would you have?"

"Anything human and natural," said Drake. "I don't care a ha'p'orth about the morality of these things—not I—but I am dead-sick of their stupidity."

Lord Robert made languid puffs of his cigarette, and said, in a tearful drawl, "My dear Drake, of course it is exactly as you say. Who doesn't know it's so. It has always been so, and always will be. But what refuge is there for the poor leisured people but these diversions which you despise? And as for the poor titled classes —well, they manage to make their play their business sometimes, don't you know. Confess that they do sometimes, now, eh?"

Lord Robert was laughing with an awkward constraint; but Drake looked frankly into his face and said—

"How's that matter going on, Robert?"

"Fairly, I think, though the girl is not very hot on it. The thing came off last week, and when it was over I felt as if I had proposed to the girl and been accepted by the mother, don't you know. I believe this rout to-night is expressly in honour of the event, so I mustn't run away from my bargain."

He lay back, sent funnels of smoke to the ceiling, and then said, with a laugh like a gurgle, "I'm not likely to, though. That eternal dun was here again to-day. I had to tell him that the marriage would come off in a year certain. That was the only understanding on which he would agree to wait for his money. . . . Bad? Of course it's bad; but what would you have, dear boy?"

The men smoked in silence for a moment, and then Lord Robert said again, "Come, old fellow, for friendship's sake, if nothing else. She's a decent little woman, and dead bent on having you at her house to-night. And if you're badly bored we'll not stay long. We'll come away early, and . . . listen!—we'll slip across to the nurses' ball at Bartimæus's Hospital—there'll be fun enough there, at all events."

"I'll go," said Drake.

Half-an-hour later the two young men were driving up to the door of Mrs. Macrae's house in Belgrave Square. There was a line of carriages in front of it, and they had to wait their turn to approach the gate. Footmen in gorgeous livery were ready to open the cab-door, to help the guests across the red baize that lay on the pavement, to usher them into the hall, to lead them to the little marble chamber where they entered their names in a list intended for the next day's *Morning Post,* and finally to direct them to the great staircase where the general crush moved slowly up to the saloon above.

In the well of the stairs, half hidden behind a little forest of palms and ferns, a band in yellow and blue uniform sat playing the people in. On the landing the hostess stood waiting to receive, and many of the guests, by a rotary movement like the waters of a maelstrom, moved past her in a rapid and babbling stream, twisted about her and came down again. She welcomed Lord Robert effusively, and motioned to him to stand by her side. Then she introduced her daughter to Drake, and sent them adrift through the rooms.

The rooms were large ones with parquet flooring, from which all furniture had been removed, except the palms and ferns by the walls and the heavy chandeliers overhead. It was not yet ten o'clock, but already the house was crowded, and every moment there were floods of fresh arrivals. First came statesmen and diplomatists, then people who had been to the theatres, and towards the end of the evening some of the actors themselves. The night was close and the atmosphere hot and oppressive. At the farther end of the suite there was a refreshment-room, with its lantern lights pulled open; and

there the crush was densest and the commotion greatest. The click-clack of many voices cut the thick air as with a thousand knives, and over the multitudinous clatter there was always the unintelligible boom of the band downstairs.

Most of the guests looked tired. The men made some effort to be cheerful, but the women were frankly jaded and fagged. Bedizened with diamonds, coated with paint and powder, laden with rustling silks, they looked weary and worn out. When spoken to they would struggle to smile, but the smiles would break down after a moment into dismal looks of misery and oppression.

"Had enough?" whispered Lord Robert to Drake.

Drake was satisfied, and Lord Robert began to make their excuses.

"Going already!" said Mrs. Macrae. "An official engagement, you say? Mr. Drake, is it? Oh, don't tell me! I know—*I* know! Well, you'll be married and settled one of these days—and then!"

They were in a hansom-cab driving across London in the direction of Bartimæus's Hospital. Drake was bareheaded and fanning himself with his crush-hat. Lord Robert was lighting a cigarette.

"Pshaw! What a stifling den! Did you ever hear such a clitter-clatter? A perfect Tower of Babel building company! What in the name of common-sense do people suppose they're doing by penning themselves up like that on a night like this? What are they thinking about?"

"Thinking about, dear boy? You're unreasonable! Nobody wants to think about anything in such scenes of charming folly."

"But the women! Did you *ever* see such faded, worn-

out dummies for the display of diamonds? Poor little women in their splendid misery! I was sorry for your *fiancée,* Robert. She was the only woman in the house without that hateful stamp of worldliness and affectation."

"My dear Drake, you've learned many things, but there's one thing you have not yet learned—you haven't learned how to take serious things as trifles and trifles as serious things. Learn it, my boy, or you'll embitter existence. You are not going to alter the conditions of civilisation by any change in your own particular life; so just look out the prettiest, wittiest, wealthiest little woman who is a dummy for the display of diamonds——"

"Me? Not if I know it, old fellow! Give me a little nature and simplicity, if it hasn't got a second gown to its back."

"All right—as you like," said Lord Robert, flinging out the end of his cigarette. "You've got the pull of some of us—you can please yourself. And here we are at old Bartimæus's, and this is a very different pair of shoes!"

They were driving out of one of London's main thoroughfares, through a groined archway, into one of London's ancient buildings with its quiet quadrangle where trees grow and birds sing. Every window of the square was lighted up, and there was a low murmur of music being played within.

"Listen," said Lord Robert. "I am here ostensibly as the guest of the visiting physician, don't you know, but really in the interests of the little friend I told you off."

"The one I got the tickets for last week?"

"Precisely."

At the next moment they were in the ball-room. It was the lecture-theatre for the students of the hospital school—a building detached from the wards, and of

circular shape, with a gallery round its walls, which were festooned with flags and roofed with a glass dome. Some two hundred girls and as many men were gathered there; the pit was their dancing-ring and the gallery was their withdrawing-room. The men were nearly all students of the medical schools, the girls were nearly all nurses, and they wore their uniform. There was not one jaded face among them—not one weary look or tired expression. They were in the fulness of youth and the height of vigour. The girls laughed with the ring of joy, their eyes sparkled with the light of happiness, their cheeks glowed with the freshness of health.

The two men stood a moment and looked on.

"Well, what do you think of it?" said Lord Robert.

Drake's wide eyes were ablaze and his voice came in gusts.

"Think of it!" he said. "It's wonderful! It's glorious!"

Lord Robert's glass had dropped from his eye and he was laughing in his drawling way.

"What are you laughing at? Women like these are at least natural, and nature cannot be put on."

The mazurka had just finished and the dancers were breaking into groups.

"Robert, tell me, who is that girl over there—the one looking this way? Is it your friend?"

Lord Robert readjusted his glass.

"The pretty dark girl with the pink and white cheeks like a doll?"

"Yes, and the taller one beside her—all hair and eyes and bosom. She's looking across now. I've seen that girl before somewhere. Now, where have I seen her? Look at her—what fire and life and movement! The dance is over, but she can't keep her feet still."

"I see—I see. But let me introduce you to the matron and doctors first, and then——"

"I know now—I know where I've seen her! Be quick, Robert—be quick!"

Lord Robert laughed again in his tired drawl. He was finding it very amusing.

XI.

When Glory learned that all nurses eligible to attend the ball were to wear hospital uniform, being on day duty, she decided to go to it. But then came John Storm's protest against the company of Polly Love, and she felt half inclined to give it up. As often as she remembered his remonstrance she was disturbed, and once or twice when alone she shed tears of anger and vexation.

Meantime Polly was full of arrangements, and Glory found herself day by day carried along in the stream of preparation. When the night came the girls dressed in the same cubicle. Polly was prattling like a parrot, but Glory was silent, and almost sad.

By help of the curling-tongs and a candle, Polly did up her dark hair into little knowing curls that went in and out on her temples and played hide-and-seek around the pretty shells of her pink and white ears. Glory was slashing the comb through her golden red hair by way of preliminary ploughing, when Polly cried, "Stop! Don't touch it any more, for goodness' sake! It's perfect! Look at yourself now."

Glory stood off from the looking-glass and looked. "Am I really so nice?" she thought; and then she remembered John Storm again, and had half a mind to tear down her glorious curls and go straight away to bed.

She went to the ball instead, and being there, she

forgot all about her misgivings. The light, the colour, the brilliance, the perfume transported her to an enchanted world which she had never entered before. She could not control her delight in it. Everything surprised her, everything delighted her, everything amused her—she was the very soul of girlish joy. The dark-brown spot on her eye shone out with a coquettish light never seen in it until now, and the warble in her voice was like the music of a happy bird. Her high spirits were infectious—her light-hearted gaiety communicated itself to everybody. The men who might not dance with her were smiling at the mere sight of the sunshine in her face, and it was even whispered about that the President of the College of Surgeons, who opened the ball, had said that her proper place was not there—a girl like that young Irish nurse would do honour to a higher assembly.

In that enchanted world of music and light and bright and happy faces Glory lost all sense of time; but two hours had passed when Polly Love, whose eyes had turned again and again to the door, tugged at her sleeve and whispered, "They've come at last! There they are—there—directly opposite to us. Keep your next dance, dear. They'll come across presently."

Glory looked where Polly had directed, and, seeing again the face she had seen in the window at the Foreign Office, something remote and elusive once more stirred in her memory. But it was gone in a moment, and she was back in that world of wonders, when a voice which she knew and yet did not know, like a voice that called to her as she was awakening out of a sleep, said—

"Glory, don't you remember me? Have you forgotten me, Glory?"

It was her friend of the Catechism class—her com-

panion of the adventure in the boat. Their hands met in a long handclasp with the gallop of feeling that is too swift for thought.

"Ah, I thought you would recognise me! How delightful!" said Drake.

"And you knew me again?" said Glory.

"Instantly—at first sight almost."

"Really! It's strange, though. Such a long, long time —ten years at least! I must have changed since then."

"You have," said Drake—"you've changed very much."

"Indeed, now! Am I really so much changed, for all? I've grown older, of course."

"Oh, terribly older!" said Drake.

"How wrong of me! But you have changed a good deal, too. You were only a boy in jackets then."

"And you were only a girl in short frocks."

They both laughed, and then Drake said, "I'm so glad we've changed together!"

"Are you?" said Glory.

"Why, yes," said Drake; "for if you had changed and I hadn't——"

"But what nonsense we're talking!" said Glory; and they both laughed again.

Then they told each other what had happened in that infinite cycle of time which had spun round since they parted. Glory had not much to narrate: her life had been empty. She had been in the Isle of Man all along, had come to London only recently, and was now a probationer-nurse at Martha's Vineyard. Drake had gone to Harrow and thence to Oxford, and being a man of artistic leanings, had wished to take up music, but his father had seen no career in it; so he had submitted — he had entered the subterranean catacombs of public

life, and was secretary to one of the Ministers. All this he talked of lightly, as became a young man of the world to whom great things were of small account.

"Glory," said Polly at her elbow, "the waltz is going to begin."

The band was preluding. Drake claimed the dance, and Glory was astonished to find she had it free (she had kept it expressly).

When the waltz was over he gave her his arm and led her into the circular corridor to talk and to cool. His manners were perfect, and his voice, so soft and yet so manly, increased the charm. In passing out of the hot dancing-room she threw her handkerchief over her head, and, with the hand that was at liberty, held its ends under her chin. She wished him to look at her and see what change this had made; so she said, quite innocently—

"And now let me look at you again, sir!"

He recognised the dark-brown spot on her eye, and he could feel her arm through her thin print dress.

"You've told me a good deal," he said, "but you haven't said a syllable about the most important thing of all."

"And pray what is that?" said she.

"How many times have you fallen in love since I saw you last?"

"Good gracious, what a question!" said Glory.

His audacity was delightful. There was something so gracious and yet so masterful about him.

"Do you remember the day you carried me off—eloped with me, you know?" said Drake.

"I? How charming of me! But when was that, I wonder?" said Glory.

"Never mind; say, do you remember?"

"Well, if I do? What a pair of little geese we must have been in those days!"

"I'm not so sure of that—*now,*" said he.

"You didn't seem very keen about me *then,* as far as I can remember," said she.

"Didn't I?" said he. "What a silly young fool I must have been!"

They laughed again. She could not keep her arm still, and he could almost feel its dimpled elbow.

"And do *you* remember the gentleman who rescued us?" she said.

"You mean the tall dark young man who kept hugging and kissing you in the yacht!"

"Did he?"

"Do you forget that kind of thing, then?"

"It was very sweet of him. But he's in the Church now, and the chaplain of our hospital."

"What a funny little romantic world it is, to be sure!" said Drake.

"Yes; it's like poetry, isn't it?" she answered.

Lord Robert came up to introduce Drake to Polly (who was not looking her sweetest), and he claimed Glory for the next dance.

"So you knew my friend Drake before?" said Lord Robert.

"I knew him when he was a boy," said Glory.

And then he began to sing his friend's praises; how he had taken a brilliant degree at Oxford, and was now private secretary to the Home Secretary, and would go into public life before long; how he could paint and act, and might have made a reputation as a musician; how he went into the best houses, and was a first-rate official;

how, in short, he had the Promised Land before him, and was just on the eve of entering it.

"Then I suppose you know he is rich—enormously rich?" said Lord Robert.

"Is he?" said Glory, and something great and grand seemed to shimmer a long way off.

"Enormously," said Lord Robert; "and yet a man of the most democratic opinions."

"Really?" said Glory.

"Yes," said Lord Robert; "and all the way down in the hansom he has been trying to show me how impossible it is to him to marry a lady."

"Now why did you tell me that, I wonder?" said Glory; and Lord Robert began to fidget with his eyeglass.

Drake returned with Polly. He proposed that they should take the air in the quadrangle, and they went off for that purpose, the girls arm-in-arm some paces ahead.

"There's a dash of Satan himself in that red-headed girl," said Lord Robert. "She understands a man before he understands himself."

"She's as natural as nature," said Drake. "And what lips—what a mouth!"

"Irish, isn't she? Oh, Manx! What's Manx, I wonder?"

The night was very warm and close, and there was hardly more air in the courtyard. The sound of the band came to them there, and Glory, who had danced with nearly everybody within, must needs dance by herself without, because the music was more sweet and subdued out there, and dancing in the darkness was like a dream.

"Come and sit down on the seat, Glory," said Polly fretfully; "you are getting on my nerves, dear."

"Glory," said Drake, "how do the Londoners strike you?"

"Much like other mortals," said Glory—"no better, no worse—only funnier."

The men laughed at that description; and Glory proceeded to give imitations of London manners—the high handshake, the "ha-ha" of the mumps, the mouthing of the Canon, and the mincing of Mr. Golightly.

Drake bellowed with delight; Lord Robert drawled out a long owlish laugh; Polly Love said spitefully, "You might give us your friend the new curate next, dearest;" and then Glory went down like a shot.

"Really," began Drake, "it's not hospital nursing, you know——"

But there were low murmurings of thunder and some large splashes of rain, and they returned to the ball-room. The doctors and the matrons were gone by this time; only the nurses and the students remained, and the fun was becoming furious. One young student was pulling down a girl's hair, and another was waltzing with his partner carried bodily in his arms. Somebody lowered the lights, and they danced in a shadow-land; somebody began to sing, and they all sang in chorus; then somebody began to fling about paper bags full of tiny white wafers, and the bags burst in the air like shells, and their contents fell like stars from a falling rocket, and everybody was covered as with flakes of snow.

Meantime the storm had broken, and, above the clash and clang of the instruments of the band and the rhythmic shuffle of the feet of the dancers and the clear and joyous notes of their happy singing, there was the roar of the thunder that rolled over London and the rattle of the rain on the glass dome overhead.

Glory was in ecstasies; it was like a mist on Peel Bay at night with the moon shining through it and the waves dancing to a north-west breeze. It was like a black and stormy sea outside Contrary with the gale coming down from the mountains. And yet it was a world of wonder and enchantment and beauty and bright and happy faces.

It was morning when the ball broke up, and then the rain had abated, though the thunder was still rumbling. The men were to see the girls back to the hospital, and Glory and Drake sat in a hansom-cab together.

"So you always forget that kind of thing, do you?" he said.

"What kind of thing?" she asked.

"Never mind—*you* know!"

She had put up the hood of her outdoor cape, but he could still see the gleam of her golden hair.

"Give me that rose," he said—"the white one that you put in your hair."

"It's nothing," she answered.

"Then give it to me. I'll keep it for ever and ever!"

She put up her hand to her head.

"Ah, how sweet of you! And what a lovely little hand! But no; let me take it for myself."

He reached one arm around her shoulder, put his hand under her chin, tipped up her face, and kissed her on the lips.

"Darling!" he whispered.

Then in a moment she awoke from her world of wonder and enchantment, and the intoxication of the evening left her. She did not speak; her head dropped; she felt her cheeks burn red, and she hid her face in her hands. There was a momentary sense of dishonour, almost of

outrage. Drake treated her lightly, and she was herself to blame.

"Forgive me, Glory!" he was saying, in a voice tremulous and intense. "It shall never happen again—never, so help me God!"

The day was dawning and the last raindrops were splashing on the wet and empty pavement. The great city lay asleep, and the distant thunder was rolling away from it.

XII.

THE chaplain of Martha's Vineyard had not been to the hospital ball. Before it came off he had thought of it a good deal, and as often as he remembered that he had protested to Glory against the company of Polly Love he felt hot and ashamed. Polly was shallow and frivolous, and had a little crab-apple of a heart, but he knew no harm of her. It was hardly manly to make a dead-set at the little thing because she was foolish and fond of dress, and because she knew a man who displeased him.

Then she was Glory's only companion, and to protest against Glory going in her company was to protest against Glory going at all. That seemed a selfish thing to do. Why should he deny her the delights of the ball? He could not go to it himself—he would not if he could; but girls liked such things—they loved to dance, and to be looked at and admired, and have men about them paying court and talking nonsense.

There was a sting in that thought, too; but he struggled to be magnanimous. He was above all mean and unmanly feelings—he would withdraw his objection.

He did not withdraw it. Some evil spirit whispered in his heart that Glory was drifting away from him. This

was the time to see for certain whether she had passed out of the range of his influence. If she respected his authority she would not go. If she went, he had lost his hold of her and their old relations were at an end.

On the night of the ball he walked over to the hospital and asked for her. She had gone, and it seemed as if the earth itself had given way beneath his feet.

He could not help feeling bitterly about Polly Love, and that caused him to remember a patient to whom her selfish little heart had shown no kindness. It was her brother. He was some nine or ten years older, and very different in character. His face was pale and thin, almost ascetic, and he had the fiery and watery eyes of the devotee. He had broken a blood-vessel and was threatened with consumption, but his case was not considered dangerous. When Polly was about, his eyes would follow her round the ward with something of the humble entreaty of a dog. It was clear that he loved his sister and was constantly thinking of her; but she hardly ever looked in his direction, and when she spoke to him it was in a cold and fretful voice.

John Storm had observed this. It had brought him close to the young man, and the starved and silent heart had opened out to him. He was a lay-brother in an Anglican Brotherhood that was settled in Bishopsgate Street. His monastic name was Brother Paul. He had asked to be sent to that hospital because his sister was a nurse there. She was his only remaining relative. One other sister he had once had, but she was gone—she was dead—she died. . . . But that was a sad and terrible story; he did not like to talk of it.

To this broken and bankrupt creature John Storm found his footsteps turning on that night when his own

heart lay waste. But on entering the ward he saw that Brother Paul had a visitor already. He was an elderly man in a strange habit—a black cassock which buttoned close at the neck and fell nearly to his feet, and was girded about the waist by a black rope that had three great knots at its suspended ends. And the habit was not more different from the habit of the world than the face of the wearer was unlike the worldly face. It was a face full of spirituality, a face that seemed to invest everything it looked upon with a holy peace, a beautiful face, without guile or craft or passion, yet not without the signs of internal strife at the temples and under the eyes; but the battles with self had all been fought and won.

As John Storm stepped up the old man rose from his chair by the patient's bed.

"This is the Father Superior, sir," said Brother Paul.

"I've just been hearing of you," said the Father in a gentle voice. "You have been good to my poor brother."

John Storm answered with some commonplace—it had been a pleasure, a happiness; the brother would soon leave them; they would all miss him, perhaps himself especially.

The Father resumed his chair and listened with an earnest smile. "I understand you, dear friend," he said. "It is so much more blessed to give than to receive. Ah, if the poor blind world only knew! How it fights for its pleasures that perish, and its pride of life that passes away! Yet to succour a weaker brother or protect a fallen woman or feed a little child will bring a greater joy than to conquer all the kingdoms of the earth."

John Storm sat down on the end of the bed. Something had gone out to him in a moment, and he was held

as by a spell. The Father talked of the love of the world—how strange it was, how difficult to understand, how tragic, how pitiful. The lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye—how mean, how delusive, how treacherous. To think of the people of that mighty city day by day and night by night making themselves miserable in order that they might make themselves merry; to think of the children of men scouring the globe for its paltry possessions, that could not add one inch to the stature of the soul, while all the while the empire of peace and joy and happiness lay here at hand, here within ourselves, here in the little narrow compass of the human heart! To give, not to get, that was the great blessedness, and to give of yourself, of your heart's love, was the greatest blessedness of all.

John Storm was stirred. "The Church, sir," he said—"the Church itself has to learn that lesson."

And then he spoke of the hopes with which he had come up to London, and how they were being broken down and destroyed; of his dreams of the Church and its mission, and how they were dying or dead already.

"What liars we are, sir! How we colour things to justify ourselves! Look at our sacraments—are they a lie or are they a sacrilege? Look at our charities—are we Pharisees or are we hypocrites? And our clergy, sir—our fashionable clergy! Surely some tremendous upheaval will shake to its foundations the Church wherein such things are possible—a Church that is more worldly than the world! And then the woman-life of the Church, see how it is thrown away. That sweetest and tenderest and holiest power, how it goes to waste under the eye and with the sanction of the Church in the frivolities of

fashion—in drawing-rooms, in gardens, in bazaars, in theatres, in balls——"

He stopped. His last word had arrested him. Had he been thinking only of himself and of Glory? His head fell, and he covered his face with his hand.

"You are right, my son," said the Father quietly, "and yet you are wrong, too. The Church of God will not be shaken to its foundations because of the Pharisees who stand in its public places, or because of the publicans who haunt its purlieus. Though the axe be laid to the rotten tree, yet the little seed will save its kind alive."

Then with an earnest smile and in a gentle voice he spoke of their little Brotherhood in Bishopsgate Street; how ten years ago they had founded it for detachment from earthly cares and earthly aims, and for hiddenness with God; how they had established it in the midst of the world's busiest highway, in the heart of the world's greatest market, to show that they despised gold and silver and all that the blind and cheated world most prizes, just as St. Philip and St. Ignatius had established the severest of modern rules in a profane and self-indulgent century to show that they could stamp out every suggestion of the flesh as a spark from the fires of hell.

And then he lifted his cord and pointed to the knots at the end of it, and told what they were—symbols of the three bonds by which he was bound—the three vows he had taken: the vow of poverty, because Christ chose it for Himself and His friends; the vow of obedience, because He had said, "He that heareth you heareth Me;" and the vow of chastity, because it was our duty to guard the gates of the senses, and to keep our eyes and ears and tongue from all inordinateness.

"But the lawful love of home and kindred," said John, "what of that?"

"We convert it into what is spiritual," said the Father. "All human love must be based on the love of God if it is to be firm and true and enduring, and the reason of so much failure of love in natural friendship is that the love of the creature is not built upon the love of the Creator."

"But the love, say, of mother and son—of brother and sister?"

"Ah, we have placed ourselves above the ordinary conditions of life, that none may claim our affections in the same way as Christ. Man has to contend with two sets of enemies—those from within and those from without—and no temptations are more subtle than those which come in the name of our holiest affections. But the sword of the Spirit must keep the tempter away. There is the Judas in all of us, and he will betray us with a kiss if he can."

John Storm's breast was heaving. He could scarcely conceal his agitation, but the Father had risen to go.

"It is eight o'clock, and I must be back to Compline," he said. And then he laughed and added, "We never ride in cabs, but I must needs walk across the Park to-night, for I have given away all my money."

At that the smile of an angel came into his old face, and he said with a sweet simplicity, "I love the Park. Every morning the children play there, and then it is the holy Catholic Church to me, and I like to walk in it and to lay my hands on the heads of the little ones, and to ask a blessing for them, and to empty myself. This morning as I was coming here I met a little boy carrying a bundle. 'And what is *your* name, my little man?' I

said, and he told me what it was. 'And how old are you?' I asked. 'Twelve years,' he answered. 'And what have you got in your bundle?' 'Father's dinner, sir,' he said. 'And what is your father, my son?' 'A carpenter,' said the boy. And I thought if I had been living in Palestine nineteen hundred years ago I might have met another little Boy carrying the dinner of His father, who was also a carpenter, in a little bundle which Mary had made up for Him. So I felt in my pocket, and all I had was my fare home again, and I gave it to the little man as a thank-offering to God that He had suffered me to meet a sweet boy of twelve whose father was a carpenter."

John Storm's eyes were dim with tears.

"Good-bye, Brother Paul, and God send you back to us soon! Good-bye to you, dear friend, and when the world deals harshly with you, come to us for a few days in Retreat, that in the silence of your soul you may forget its vanities and vexations, and fix your thoughts above."

John Storm could not resist the impulse; he dropped to his knees at the Father's feet.

"Bless me also, Father, as you blessed the carpenter's boy."

The Father raised two fingers of his right hand and said—

"God bless you, my son, and be with you and strengthen you, and when He smiles on you, may the frown of man affect you not! Father in heaven, look down on this fiery soul and succour him! Help him to cast off every anchor that holds him to the world, and make him as a voice crying in the wilderness, 'Come out of her, my people, saith our God.'"

When John rose from his knees, the saintly face was

gone, and all the air seemed to be filled with a heavenly calm.

While he had been kneeling for the Father's blessing, he had been aware of a step on the floor behind him. It was his fellow-curate, the Reverend Golightly, who was still waiting to deliver his message.

The Canon had been disappointed in one of his preachers for Sunday, and being himself engaged to preside over the annual dinner of a Dramatic Benevolent Fund to be held on the Saturday night, and therefore incapable of extra preparation, he desired that Mr. Storm should take the sermon on Sunday morning. John promised to do so. His fellow-curate smiled, bowed, coughed, and left him.

A small room was kept for the chaplain on the ground-floor of the hospital, and he went down to it and wrote a letter.

It was to the parson at Peel:—

"No doubt you hear from Glory frequently, and know all about her progress as a probationer. She seems to be very well, and certainly I have never seen her look so bright and so cheerful. At the moment of writing she is out at a ball given by some of the hospital authorities. Well, it is a perfectly harmless source of pleasure, and with all my heart I hope she is enjoying herself. No doubt, some form of amusement is necessary to a young girl in the height of her youth and health and beauty, and he would be only a poor sapless man who could not take delight in the thought that a good girl was happy. Her fellow-nurses, too, are noble and devoted women, doing true woman's work, and if there are some black

sheep among them, that is no more than might be expected of the purest profession in the world.

"As for myself, I have tried to carry out my undertaking to look after Glory, but I cannot say how long I may be able to continue the task. Do not be surprised if I am compelled to give it up. You know I am dissatisfied with my present surroundings, and I am only waiting for the ruling and direction of the pillar of cloud and fire. God alone can tell how it will move, but God will guide me. I don't go out more than I can help, and when I do go I get humiliated and feel foolish. The life of London has been a great and painful surprise. I had supposed that I knew all about it, but I have really known nothing until now. Its cruelty, its deceit, and its treachery are terrible. London is the Judas that is for ever betraying with a kiss the young, the hopeful, the innocent. However, it helps one to know oneself, and that is better than lying wrapped in cotton wool. Give my kindest greetings to everybody at Glenfaba—my love to my father, too, if there are any means of conveying it."

The letter took him long to write, and when it was written he went out into the hall to post it. There he saw that a thunderstorm was coming, and he concluded to remain until it had passed over. He stepped into the library and selected a book, and returned to his room to read it. The book was "St. John Chrysostom on the Priesthood," and the subject was congenial, but he could not keep his mind on the printed page. He thought of the Father Superior, of the little Brotherhood in Bishopsgate, and then of Glory at the hospital ball, and again of Glory, and yet again and again of Glory. Do what he would he could not help but think of her.

The storm pealed over his head, and when he returned to the hall two hours later it was still far from spent. He stood at the open door and watched it. Forks of lightning lit up the Park, and floods of black rain made the vacant pavements like the surface of the sea. A tinkling cab slid past at intervals with its driver sheeted in oil-skins, and now and then there was an omnibus full within and empty without. Only one other living thing was to be seen anywhere. An Italian organ man had stationed himself in front of a mansion to the left and was playing vigorously.

John Storm walked through the hospital. It was now late, and the house was quiet. The house-doctor had made the last of his rounds and turned into his chambers across the courtyard, and the night nurses were boiling little kettles in their rooms between the wards. The surgical wards were darkened, and the patients were asleep already. In the medical wards there were screens about certain of the beds, and weary moans came from behind them.

It was after midnight when John Storm came round to the hall again, and then the rain had ceased, but the thunder was still rumbling. He might have gone home at length, but he did not go; he realised that he was waiting for Glory. Other nurses returned from the ball, and bowed to him and passed into the house. He stepped into the porter's lodge, and sat down and watched the lightning. It began to be terrible to him, because it seemed to be symbolical. What doom or what disaster did this storm typify and predict? Never could he forget the night on which it befell. It was the night of the nurses' ball.

He thought he must have slept, for he shook himself

and thought, "What nonsense! Surely the soul leaves the body while we are asleep, and only the animal remains!"

It was now almost daylight, and two hansom cabs had stopped before the portico, and several persons who were coming up the steps were chattering away like wakened linnets. One voice was saying—

"Mr. Drake proposes that we should all go to the theatre, and if we can get a late pass I should like it above everything." It was Glory; and a fretful voice answered her—

"Very well, if *you* say so. It's all the same to *me.*" It was Polly; and then a man's voice said—

"What night shall it be then, Robert?"

And a second man's voice answered, with a drawl, "Better let the girls choose for themselves, don't you know."

John Storm felt his hands and feet grow cold, and he stepped out into the porch. Glory saw him coming and made a faint cry of recognition.

"Ah, here is Mr. Storm! Mr. Storm, you should know Mr. Drake. He was in the Isle of Man, you remember——"

"I do *not* remember," said John Storm.

"But you saved his life, and you ought to know him——"

"I do *not* know him," said John Storm.

She was beginning to say, "Let me introduce——" But she stopped and stood silent for a moment, while the strange light came into her gleaming eyes of something no word could express, and then she burst into noisy laughter.

A superintendent Sister going through the hall at the moment drew up and said, "Nurse, I am surprised at you! Go to your room this instant;" and the girls whispered their adieux and went off giggling.

"What a glorious night it has been!" said Glory, going upstairs.

"I'm glad you think so," said Polly. "To tell you the truth, I found it dreadfully tiresome."

The two men lit their cigarettes and got back into one of the hansoms and drove away.

"What a bear that man is!" said Lord Robert.

"Rude enough certainly," said Drake; "but I liked his face for all that; and if the fates put it into his head to stand between me and death—well, I'm not going to forget it."

"Give him a wide berth, dear boy. The fellow is an actor—an affected fop. I met him at Mrs. Macrae's on Thursday. He is a religious actor and a *poseur*. He'll do something one of these days, take my word for it."

And meanwhile John Storm had buttoned his long coat up to his throat and was striding home through the echoing streets, with both hands clenched and his teeth set hard.

XIII.

MARTHA'S.

Oh, Lord-a-massy! Oh, gough bless me sowl! Oh, my beloved grandfather! John Storm has done for himself at last! That man was never an author of peace and a lover of concord; but, my gracious, if you had heard his sermon in church on Sunday morning! Being a holy and humble woman of heart myself, I altered the Litany the smallest taste possible, and muttered away from beginning to end, "O Lord, close thou our lips;" but the Lord didn't heed me in the least, with the result that everybody on earth is now screaming and snarling at our

poor Mr. Storm exactly as if he had been picking the pocket of the universe.

It was all about the morality of men. The text was as innocent as a baby, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof." And when he began in the usual way, the dear old goodies in glasses thought he had been wound up like the musical-box and had just turned on the crank; so they cuddled in comfortably for forty winks before the anthem. There were two natures in man, and man's body might be good or bad according as spiritual or carnal affections swayed it, and all the rest of the good old change-for-sixpence-and-a-ha'penny-out, you know. But the lesson had been from Isaiah, where the unreasonable old prophet is indignant with the ladies of Zion because they don't want to look like dowdies, you remember: "Tremble, ye women that are at ease; strip you, and make you bare, and gird sackcloth upon your loins." And off he went like a comet, with the fashionable woman for his tail. If matrimony nowadays didn't always mean monogamy, who was chiefly to blame? Men were generally as pure as women required that they should be; and if the lives of men were bad, it was often because women did not demand that they should be good. Tremble, ye women that are at ease, and say why you allow your daughters to marry men who in fact and effect are married already. Strip you, and be ashamed for the poor women who were the first wives of your daughters' husbands, and for the children whom such men abandon and forget. In leading your innocent daughters to courts and receptions, you are only leading them to the auction-room, and in dressing and decorating them you are preparing them for the market of base men. Last week some titled philan-

thropist had hauled up a woman in the East End of London for attempting to sell her daughter. How shocking! everybody said. What a disgrace to the nineteenth century! But the wretched creature had only been doing the best according to her light for the welfare of her miserable child, while here—with their eyes open, with their cultured consciences—the wives of these same philanthropists were doing the same thing every day—the very same!

Having gone for the mammies like this, he went for the dear girls themselves one better. Let them gird sackcloth on their loins and hide their faces. Why did they suffer themselves to be sold? The woman who married a man for the sake of his title or his position or any worldly advantage whatever was no better than an outcast of the streets. Her act was the same, and in all reason and justice her name should be the same also.

Hey, nonny, nonny! I told you how he broke down before; but on Sunday morning, in spite of mine own amended Litany, I had just as much hope of the breakdown of the falls of Niagara or a nineteen-feet spring tide. You would have said his face was afire, and those great eyes of his were lit up like the red lamps on Peel pier.

Pulpit oratory! I don't know what it is, only I never heard the like of it in all my born days. I begin to think the real difference between preachers is the difference of the fire beneath the crust. In some it burns so low that it doesn't even warm the surface, and you couldn't get up enough puff to boil the kitchen-kettle; but in others—look out! It's a volcano, and the lava is coming down with a rush.

Mercy me, how I cried! "Oh, my daughter, oh, my

child, what a ninny you are!" I told myself; but it was no use talking. His voice was as hoarse as a raven's, and sometimes you would have thought his very heart was breaking.

But the congregation! You should have seen the transformation scene! They had come in bowing and smiling and whispering softly until the church was a perfect sheet of sunshine, an absolute aurora borealis; but they went out like a north-east gale with mutterings of thunder and one man overboard.

And John Storm having put his foot in it, of course Glory Quayle had to get her toe in too. Coming down the aisle, some of the dear ladies of Zion, who looked as if they wanted to "swear in their wrath," were mumbling all the lamentations of Jeremiah. Who was he, indeed, to talk to people like that? Nobody had ever heard of him except his mother. And in the porch they came upon a fat old dump in a velvet dolman who declared it was perfectly scandalous, and she had had to come out in the middle. Whereupon Glory, *not* being delivered that day from all evil and mischief, said, "Quite right, ma'am, and you were not the only one who had to leave the church in the middle of that sermon." "Why, who else had to go?" said this female Pharisee. "The devil, ma'am," said Glory, and then left her with that bone to gnaw.

It turns out that the old girlie in the dolman is a mighty patron of this hospital, so everybody says I am in for nasty weather. But hoot! My heart's in the Hielan's, my heart is not here, my heart's in the Hielan's, sae what can I fear!

John Storm is in for it too, and they say his vicar waited for him in the vestry, but he looked like forked

lightning coming out of the pulpit, so the good man thought it better to keep his rod in pickle awhile. It seems that the Lords of the Council and all the nobility were there, and it is a point of religious etiquette in London that in the hangman's house nobody speaks of the rope; but our poor John gave them the gibbet as well. It was a fearful thing to do, but nobody will make me believe he had not got his reasons. He hasn't been here since, but I am certain he has his eye on some fine folks, and whoever they are I'll bet "my bottom dollar" they deserved all they got.

But heigho! I haven't left myself breath to tell you about the ball. I was there! You remember I was lamenting that I hadn't got the necessary finery. In fact, I had put in a bit at the end of my prayers about it. "Oh, God, be good to me this once and let me look nice." And He *was*. He put it into the heads of the nabobs of this vineyard that nurses should "appear at the nurses' ball in regulation uniform only." So my cloak and my bonnet and my grey dress and my apron covered a multitude of sins.

You should have seen Glory that night, grandfather. She was a redder young lobster than ever, somehow; but she put a white rose in her carroty curls, and, gough bless me, what a bogh* she was, though! Of course, she made the acquaintance of the "higher ranks of society," and danced with all the earth. The great surgeon of something opened the ball with the matron of Bartimæus's, and she went round on his arm like a dolly in a dolly-tub; but he soon saw what a marvellous and miraculous being Glory was, and, after I had waltzed so beautifully with the ancient personage, I had the hearts of all the young men

* Dear.

flying round at the hem of my white petticoat—it was a nice new one for the occasion.

But the strangest thing was that somebody from the Isle of Man flopped down on me there just as if he had descended from the blue. It was that little English boy Drake, who used to come to the Catechism class, only now he is one of the smartest and handsomest young men in London. When he came up and announced himself, I am sure he expected me to expire on the spot or else go crazy, and of course I was trembling all over; but I behaved like a rational person, and stood my ground. He looked at me as much as to say, "Do you know you've grown to be a very fine young woman, and I admire you very much?" Whereupon I looked back as much as to reply, "That's quite right, my dear young sir, and I should have a poor opinion of you if you didn't." So being of the same opinion on the only subject worth thinking about (that's me), I behaved charmingly to him, and even forgave him when he carried off my white rose at the end.

Mr. Drake has a friend who is always with him. He is a willowy person, who owns sixteen setters and three church livings, they say, and wears (on week-days) a thunder-and-lightning suit of clothes—*you* know, a pattern so large that one man can't carry the whole of it and somebody else goes about with the rest. His name is Lord Robert Ure, and I intend to call him Lord Bob, for since he is such a frivolous person himself I must make a point of being severe. I danced with him, of course, and he kept telling me what a wonderful future Mr. Drake had, and how the Promised Land was before him, and even hinting that it wouldn't be a bad thing to be Mrs. Joshua. Fancy Glory making a tremendous match with a leader of society! And if I hadn't gone to that hospital

ball, no doubt the history of the nineteenth century would have been different!

They are going to take me next week to something far, far better than a ball, only I must not tell you anything about it yet, except that I keep awake all night sometimes to think of it. But thou sure and firmest earth, hear not my steps which way they walk!

It's late, and I'm just going to cuddle in. Good night! My kisses for the aunties and my love to everybody! In fact, you can serve out my love in ladles this time—being cheap at present, and plenty more where this is coming from.

Oh, I forgot to tell you what happened when we returned to the hospital! It was shockingly late, and the gentlemen had brought us back; but there was our John Storm with his sad and anxious face, waiting up to see us safely home. He was angry with me, and I didn't mind that in the least; but when I saw that he liked me well enough to be rude to the gentlemen, I fell a victim to the crafts and assaults of the devil, and couldn't help laughing out loud; and then Ward Sister Allworthy came along and lifted her lip and showed me her tusk.

It was a wonderful night altogether, and I was never so happy in my life; but all the same I had a good cry to myself alone before going to bed. Too much water had'st thou, poor Ophelia! Talk about two natures in one, I've got two hundred and fifty, and they all want to do different things! Ah me! the "ould Book" says that woman was taken out of the rib of a man, and I feel sometimes as if I want to get back to my old quarters.

GLORY.

P.S.—I'll write you a full and particular account of

the great event of next week after it is over. Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck, till thou applaud the deed. You see I don't want you to eat your meal in fear, or your porridge either. But I am burning with impatience for the night to come, and would like to run to it. Oh, if it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well it were done quickly! See? I am going in for a course of Shakespeare!

XIV.

A WEEK later Glory made her first visit to the theatre. Her companions were Drake, who was charmed with her *naïveté,* Lord Robert, who was amused by it, and Polly Love, who was annoyed and ashamed, and uttered little peevish exclamations.

As they entered the box which they were to occupy, the attendant drew back the curtain, and at sight of the auditorium she cried "Oh!" and then checked herself and coloured deeply.

With her eyes down she sat where directed in one of the three seats in front, Polly being on her right and Drake on her left, and Lord Robert at the back of the lace curtain. For some minutes she did not smile or stir, and when she spoke it was always in whispers. A great awe seemed to have fallen upon her, and she was behaving as she behaved in church.

Drake began to explain the features of the theatre. Down there were the stalls, and behind the stalls was the pit. The body? Well, yes—the body, so to speak. And the three galleries were the dress circle, the family circle, and the gallery proper. The organ-loft? No, there was no organ, but that empty place below was the well for the orchestra.

"And what is this little vestry?" she said.

"Oh, this is a private box where we can sit by ourselves and talk!" said Drake.

At every other explanation she had made little whispered cries of astonishment and delight; but when she heard that conversation was not forbidden she was entirely happy. She thought a theatre was even more beautiful than a church, and supposed an actor must have a wonderful living.

The house was filling rapidly, and as the people entered she watched them intently.

"What a beautiful congregation," she whispered—"audience, I mean!"

"Do you think so?" said Polly; but Glory did not hear her.

It was delightful to see so many lovely faces and listen to the low hum of their conversation. She felt happy among them already and quite kind to everybody, because they had all come together to enjoy themselves. Presently she bowed to someone in the stalls with a face all smiles, and then said to Polly—

"How nice of her! A lady moved to me from the body. How friendly they are in theatres!"

"But it was to Mr. Drake," said Polly; and then Glory could have buried her face in her confusion.

"Never mind, Glory," said Drake; "that's a lady who will like you the better for the little mistake. Rosa," he added, with a look towards Lord Robert, who smoothed his moustache and bent his head.

Polly glanced up quickly at mention of the name; and Drake explained that Rosa was a friend of his own—a lady journalist, Miss Rosa Macquarrie, a good and clever woman. Then, turning back to Glory, he said—

"She has been standing up for your friend Mr. Storm this week. You know there have been attacks upon him in the newspapers?"

"Has she?" said Glory, recovering herself and looking down again. "Which pew—stall, I mean——"

But the people were clapping their hands and turning their faces to the opposite side of the theatre. Some great personage was entering the royal box.

"My chief, the Home Secretary," said Drake; and, when the applause had subsided and the party were seated, the great man recognised his secretary and bowed to him; whereupon it seemed to Glory that every face in the theatre turned about and looked at her.

She did not flinch, but bore herself bravely. There was a certain thrill and a slight twitching of the head, such as a charger makes at the first volley in battle—nothing more, not even the quiver of an eyelid. This was the atmosphere in which Drake lived, and she felt a vague gratitude to him for allowing her to move in it.

"Isn't it beautiful!" she whispered, turning towards Polly; but Polly's face was hidden behind the curtain.

The orchestra was coming in, and Glory leaned forward and counted the fiddles, while Drake talked with Lord Robert across her shoulder.

"I found him reading Rosa's article this morning, and it seems he was present himself and heard the sermon," said Drake.

"And what's his opinion?" asked Lord Robert.

"Much the same as your own. Affectation—the man is suffering from the desire to be original—more egotism than love of truth, and so forth."

"Right, too, dear boy. All this vapouring is as much

as to say, 'Look at me! I am the Hon. and Rev. Mr. Thingamy, nephew of the Prime Minister, and yet——'"

"I don't at all agree with the chief," said Drake, "and I told him so. The man has enthusiasm, and that's the very salt of the earth at present. We are all such pessimists in these days. Thank God for anybody who will warm us up with a little faith, say I!"

Glory's bosom heaved, and she was just about to speak when there was a sudden clap as of thunder, and she leapt up in her seat. But it was only the beginning of the overture, and she sat down laughing. There was a tender passage in the music; and after it was over she was very quiet for awhile, and then whispered to Polly that she hoped little Johnnie wasn't worse to-night, and it seemed wicked to enjoy oneself when anyone was so poorly.

"Who is that?" said Drake.

"My little boy whose leg was amputated," said Glory.

"This Glory is so funny!" said Polly. "Fancy talking of that here!"

"Hush!" said Lord Robert, "the curtain is going up"—and the next moment Glory was laughing because they were all in the dark.

The play was "Much Ado about Nothing," and Glory whispered to Drake that she had never seen it before, but she had read "Macbeth," and knew all about Shakespeare and the drama. The first scene took her breath away, being so large and so splendid. It represented the outside of a gentleman's house, and she thought what a length of time it must have taken to build it, considering it was to last only a single night. But hush! The people were going indoors. No; they preferred to talk in the

street. Oh, we were in Italy? Yes, indeed, that was different.

Leonato delivered his first speeches forcibly, and was rewarded with applause. Glory clapped her hands also, and said he was a very good actor for such a very old gentleman.

Then Beatrice made her entrance, and was greeted with cheers, whereupon Glory looked perplexed.

"It's Terry," whispered Polly; and Drake said "Ellen Terry;" but Glory still looked puzzled.

"They are calling her 'Beatrice,'" she said. Then, mastering the situation, she looked wise, and said, "Of course—the actress—I quite understand; but why do they applaud her—she has done nothing yet?"

Drake explained that the lady playing Beatrice was a great favourite, and that the applause of the audience had been of the nature of a welcome to a welcome guest, as much as to say they had liked her before, and were glad to see her again. Glory thought that was beautiful, and, looking at the gleaming eyes that shone out of the darkness, she said—

"How lovely to be an actress!"

Then she turned back to the stage, where all was bright and brilliant, and said, "What a lovely frock, too!"

"Only a stage costume, my dear," said Polly.

"And what beautiful diamonds!"

"Paste," said Lord Robert.

"Hush!" said Drake; and then Benedick entered, and the audience received him with great cheering. "Irving," whispered Drake; and Glory looked more perplexed than before, and said—

"But you told me it was Mr. Irving's theatre, and I thought it would have been his place to welcome——"

The vision of Benedick clapping his hands at his own entrance set Lord Robert laughing in his cold way; but Drake said, "Be quiet, Robert!"

Glory, like a child, had ears for no conversation except her own, and she was immersed in the play in a moment. The merry war of Beatrice and Benedick had begun, and as she watched it her face grew grave.

"Now, that's very foolish of her," she said; "and if, as you say, she's a great actress, she shouldn't do such things. To talk like that to a man is to let everybody see that she likes him better than anybody else, though she's trying her best to hide it. The silly girl—he'll find her out!"

But the curtain had gone down on the first act, the lights had suddenly gone up, and her companions were laughing at her. Then she laughed also.

"Of course, it's only a play," she said largely, "and I know all about plays and about acting, and I can act myself, too."

"I'm sure you can," said Polly, lifting her lip. But Glory took no notice.

Throughout the second act she put on the same airs of knowledge, watching the masked ball intently, but never once uttering a laugh, and hardly ever smiling. The light, the colour, the dresses, the gay young faces, enchanted her; but she struggled to console herself. It was only her body that was up there, leaning over the front of the box with lips twitching and eyes gleaming; her soul was down on the stage, clad in a lovely gown, and carrying a mask, and laughing and joking with Benedick; but she held herself in, and when the curtain fell she began to talk of the acting.

She was still of opinion that Leonato was excellent

for such an elderly gentleman, and when Polly praised Claudio, she agreed that he was good too.

"But Benedick is my boy for all," she said. In some way she had identified herself with Beatrice, and hardly ever spoke of her.

During the third act this air of wisdom and learning broke down badly. In the middle of the ballad, "Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more," she remembered Johnnie, and whispered to Drake how ill he had been when they left the hospital. And when it was over, and Benedick protested that the song had been vilely sung, she sat back in her seat and said she didn't know how Mr. Irving could say such a thing, for she was sure the boy had sung it beautifully.

"But that's the author," whispered Drake; and then she said wisely—

"Oh, yes, I know—Shakespeare, of course."

Then came the liming of the two love-birds, and she declared that everybody was in love in plays of that sort, and that was why she liked them; but as for those people playing the trick, they were very simple if they thought Beatrice didn't know she loved Benedick. Claudio fell woefully in her esteem in other respects also, and when he agreed to spy on Hero, she said he ought to be ashamed of himself anyhow.

"How ridiculous you are!" said Polly. "It's the author, isn't it?"

"Then the author ought to be ashamed of himself also, for it is unjust and cruel and unnecessary," said Glory.

The curtain had come down again by this time, and the men were deep in an argument about morality in art, Lord Robert protesting that art had no morality, and

Drake maintaining that what Glory said was right, and there was no getting to the back of it.

But the fourth act witnessed Glory's final vanquishment. When she found the scene was the inside of a church, and they were to be present at a wedding, she could not keep still on her seat for delight; but when the marriage was stopped, and Claudio uttered his denunciation of Hero, she said it was just like him, and it would serve him right if nobody believed him.

"Hush!" said somebody near them.

"But they *are* believing him," said Glory, quite audibly.

"Hush! hush!" came from many parts of the theatre.

"Well, that's shameful—her father, too——" began Glory.

"Hush, Glory!" whispered Drake; but she had risen to her feet, and when Hero fainted and fell she uttered a cry.

"What a girl!" whispered Polly. "Sit down—everybody's looking!"

"It's only a play, you know," whispered Drake; and Glory sat down and said—

"Well, yes, of course, it's only a play. Did you suppose——"

But she was lost in a moment. Beatrice and Benedick were alone in the church now; and when Beatrice said "Kill Claudio," Glory leapt up again and clapped her hands. But Benedick would not kill Claudio, and it was the last straw of all. That wasn't what she called being a great actor, and it was shameful to sit and listen to such plays. Lots of disgraceful scenes happened in life, but people didn't come to the theatre to see such things, and she would go.

"How ridiculous you are!" said Polly; but Glory was out in the corridor, and Drake was going after her.

She came back at the beginning of the fifth act with red eyes and confused smiles, looking very much ashamed. From that moment onward she cried a good deal, but gave no other sign until the green curtain came down at the end, when she said—

"It's a wonderful thing! To make people forget it's not true is the most wonderful thing in the world!"

Lord Robert, standing behind the curtain at the back of Polly's chair, had been laughing at Glory with his long owlish drawl, and making cynical interjections by way of punctuating her enthusiasm; and now he said, "Would you like to have a nearer view of your wonderful world, Glory?"

Glory looked perplexed, and Drake muttered, "Hold your tongue, Robert!" Then, turning to Glory, he said shortly, "He only asked you if you would like to go behind the scenes; but I don't think——"

Glory uttered a cry of delight. "Like it? Better than anything in the world!"

"Then I must take you to a rehearsal somewhere," said Lord Robert; "and you'll both come to tea at the chambers afterwards."

Drake made some show of dissent; but Polly, with her most voluptuous look upwards, said it would be perfectly charming, and Glory was in raptures.

The girls, by their own choice, went home without escort by the Hammersmith omnibus. They sat on opposite sides and hardly talked at all. Polly was humming idly, "Sigh no more, ladies."

Glory was in a trance. A great, bright, beautiful world had that night swum into her view, and all her

heart was yearning for it with vague and blind aspirations. It might be a world of dreams, but it seemed more real than reality, and when the omnibus passed the corner of Piccadilly Circus she forgot to look at the women who were crowding the pavement.

The omnibus drew up for them at the door of the hospital, and they took long breaths as they went up the steps.

In the corridor to the surgical ward they came upon John Storm. His head was down and his step was long and measured, and he seemed to be trying to pass them in his grave silence; but Glory stopped and spoke, while Polly went on to her cubicle.

"You here so late?" she said.

He looked steadily into her face, and answered, "I was sent for—someone was dying."

"Was it little Johnnie?"

"Yes."

There was not a tear now—not the quiver of an eyelid.

"I don't think I care for this life," she said fretfully. "Death is always about you everywhere, and a girl can never go out to enjoy herself but——"

"It is true woman's work," said John hotly—"the truest, noblest work a woman can have in all the world!"

"Perhaps," said Glory, swinging on her heel. "All the same——"

"Good-night!" said John, and he turned on his heel also.

She looked after him and laughed. Then with a little hard lump at her heart she took herself off to bed.

Polly Love, in the next cubicle, was humming as she undressed—

"Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,
Men were deceivers ever."

That night Glory dreamt that she was back at Peel. She was sitting up on Peel hill, watching the big ships as they weighed anchor in the bay beyond the old dead castle walls, and wishing she were going out with them to the sea and the great cities so far away.

XV.

John Storm was sitting in his room next morning fumbling the leaves of a book and trying to read, when a lady visitor was announced. It was Miss Macrae, and she came in with a flushed face, a quivering lip, and the marks of tears in her eyes. She held his hand with the same long hand-clasp as before, and said in a tremulous voice—

"I am ashamed of coming, and mother does not know that I am here; but I am very unhappy, and if you cannot help me——"

"Please sit down," said John Storm.

"I have come to tell you," she said; and then her sad eyes moved about the room and came back to his face. "It is about Lord Robert Ure, and I am very wretched."

"Tell me everything, dear lady, and if there is anything I can do——"

She told him all. It was a miserable story. Her mother had engaged her to Lord Robert Ure (there was no other way of putting it) for the sake of his title, and he had engaged himself to her for the sake of her wealth. She had never loved him, and had long known that he was a man of scandalous reputation; but she had been taught that to attach weight to such considerations would

be girlish and sentimental, and she had fought for awhile and then yielded.

"You will reproach me for my feebleness," she said, and he answered haltingly—

"No, I do not reproach you—I pity you!"

"Well," she said, "it is all over now, and if I am ruined, and if my mother——"

"You have told her you cannot marry him?"

"Yes."

"Then who am I to reproach you?" he said; and rising to his feet, he threw down his book.

Her dark eyes wandered about the room, and came back to his face again and shone with a new lustre.

"I heard your sermon on Sunday, Mr. Storm, and I felt as if there were nobody else in the church, and you were speaking to me alone. And last night at the theatre——"

"Well?"

He had been tramping the room, but he stopped.

"I saw him in a box with his friend and two—two ladies."

"Were they nurses from the hospital?"

She made a cry of surprise and said, "Then you know all about it, and the sermon *was* meant for me?"

He did not speak for a moment, and then he said, with a thick utterance—

"You wish me to help you to break off this marriage, and I will try. But if I fail, no matter what has happened in the past, or what awaits you in the future——"

"Oh," she said, "if I had your strength beside me I should be brave—I should be afraid of nothing.

"Good-bye, dear lady," said John Storm, and before

he could prevent her she had stooped over his hand and kissed it.

John Storm had returned to his book, and was clutching it with nervous fingers, when his fellow-curate came with a message from the Canon to request his presence in the study.

"Tell him I was on the point of going down," said John; and the Reverend Golightly coughed and bowed himself out.

The Canon had also had a visitor that morning. It was Mrs. Macrae herself. She sat on a chair covered with a tiger-skin, sniffed at her scented handkerchief, and poured out all her sorrows.

Mercy had rebelled against her authority, and it was entirely the fault of the new curate, Mr. Storm. She had actually refused to carry out her engagement with Lord Robert, and it all came of that dreadful sermon on Sunday. It was dishonourable, it was unprincipled, and it was a pretty thing to teach girls to indulge their whims without regard to the wishes of parents.

"Here have I been two years in London, spending a fortune on the girl, and trying to do my best for her, and the moment I fix her in one of the first English families, this young man—this curate—this . . . Upon my honour, it's real wicked, it's shameful!" And the handkerchief steeped in perfume went up from the nose to the eyes.

The Canon swung his pince-nez. "Don't put yourself about, my dear Mrs. Macrae. Leave the matter to me. Miss Macrae will give up her objections and——"

"Oh, you mustn't judge her by her quietness, Canon. You don't know her character. She's real stubborn when her mind's made up. But I'll be as stubborn as she is

—I'll take her back to America—I'll never spend another penny——"

"And as for Mr. Storm," continued the Canon, "I'll make everything smooth in that quarter. You mustn't think too much about the unhappy sermon—a little youthful *esprit fort*—we all go through it, you know."

When Mrs. Macrae had gone he rang twice for Mr. Golightly, and said, "Tell Mr. Storm to come down to me immediately."

"With pleasure, sir," said the little man: and then he hesitated.

"What is it?" said the Canon, adjusting his glasses.

"I have never told you, sir, how I found him the night you sent me to the hospital."

"Well, how?"

"On his knees to a Catholic priest who was visiting a patient."

The Canon's glasses fell from his eyes and his broad face broke into strange smiles.

"I thought the Sorceress of Rome was at the bottom of it," he said. "His uncle shall know of this, and unless I am sadly deceived . . . But fetch him down."

John Storm was wearing his flannel shirt that morning, and he came downstairs with a heavy tread and swung himself, unasked, into the chair that had just before been occupied by Mrs. Macrae.

The perpendicular wrinkles came between the Canon's eyebrows, and he said: "My dear Storm, I have postponed as long as possible a painful interview. The fact is, your recent sermon has given the greatest offence to the ladies of my congregation, and if such teaching were persisted in we should lose our best people. Now, I don't want to be angry with you, quite the contrary, but I wish to put

it to you, as your spiritual head and adviser, that your idea of religion is by no means agreeable to the needs and necessities of the nineteenth century. There is no freedom in such a faith, and St. Paul says, 'Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.' But the theory of your religion is not more unscriptural than its application is unwholesome. Yours is a gloomy faith, my dear Storm, and what did Luther say of a gloomy faith?—that the devil was very apt to be lurking behind it. As for himself, he married, you may remember; he had children, he played chess, he loved to see young people dancing——"

"I don't object to the dancing, sir," said John Storm. "I only object to the tune."

"What do you mean?" said the Canon, not without insolence, and the perpendicular wrinkles became large and heavy.

"I mean, sir," said John Storm, "that half the young people now-a-days—the young women in the West of London especially—are asked to dance to the 'Dead March.'"

And then he spoke of the infamous case of Mercy Macrae, how she was being bought and sold, and how scandalous was the reputation of the man she was required to marry.

"That was what I was coming down to speak about, sir—to ask you to save this innocent girl from such a mockery of holy wedlock. She is not a child, and the law cannot help her, but you can do so, because the power of the Church is at your back. You have only to set your face against this infamy and say——"

"My dear Mr. Storm" (the Canon was smiling condescendingly and swinging his glasses), "the business of the Church is to solemnise marriages, not to make them. But if the young lady comes to me I will say, 'My dear young

lady, the conditions you complain of are more common than you suppose; put aside all foolish romantic notions, make a nest for yourself as comfortably as you can, and come back in a year to thank me.'"

John Storm was on his feet; the blood was mounting to his face and tingling in his fingers.

"And so these men are to make their wives of the daughters of the poor first, and then ask the Church to solemnise their polygamy——"

But the Canon had lifted his hand to silence him.

"My dear young friend, a policy like yours would decimate the House of Commons and abolish the House of Lords. Practical religion has a sweet reasonableness. We are all human, even if we are all gentlemen, and while silly young things——"

But John Storm was out in the hall and putting on his hat to see Glory.

Glory had not yet awakened from her trance. While others were living in to-day, she was still going about in yesterday. The emotion of the theatre was upon her, and the world of reality took the tone and colour of drama. This made her a tender woman but a bad nurse.

She began the day in the out-patient department, and a poor woman came with a child that had bitten its tongue. Its tongue had to be stitched, and the child's condition required that it should remain in the house a day or two. "Let me put the pore thing to bed, she's allus used to me," said the woman piteously. "Are you the mother?" said the Sister. "No, the grandmother." "The mother is the only person who can enter the wards except on visiting-day." The poor woman began to cry. Glory had to carry the child to bed, and she whispered to the grandmother, "Come this way," and the woman

followed her. When they came to the surgical ward, she said to the nurse in charge, "This is the child's mother, and she has come to put the poor little thing to bed."

Later in the morning she was sent up to help in the same ward. A patient in great pain called to her and said, "Loosen this bandage for me, nurse—it is killing me." And she loosened it.

But the glamour of the theatre was upon her as well as its sentiment and emotion, and in the space before the bed of one of the patients, at a moment when the ward Sister was away, she began to make imitations of Beatrice and Benedick and the singer of "Sigh no more, ladies." The patient was Koenig, the choir-master of All Saints, a little fat German, with long moustaches, which he waxed and curled as he lay in bed. Glory had christened him "the hippopotamus," and at her mimicry he laughed so much that he rolled and pitched and dived among the bedclothes.

"Ach, Gott!" he cried, "vot a girl! Never—I haf never heard anyone so goot on de stage. Vot a voice, too! A leetle vork under a goot teacher, and den, mine Gott! Vot is it de musicians say?—the genius has a Cremona inside of him on which he first composes his immortal vorks. You haf the Cremona, my dear, and I vill help you to bring it out. Vot you tink?"

It was the hour of the morning when the patients who can afford it have their newspaper brought up to them, but the newspapers were thrown aside, every eye was on Glory, and there was much laughter, and even some clapping of hands.

Ward Sister Allworthy entered with the house-doctor.

"What's the meaning of this?" she demanded. Glory told the truth, and was reproved.

"Who has loosened this bandage?" said the doctor. The patient tried to prevaricate, but Glory told the truth again, and was reproved once more.

"And who permitted this woman to come into the ward?" said the nurse.

"I did," said Glory.

"You're not fit to be a nurse, miss, and I shall certainly report you as unfit for duty."

Glory laughed in the Sister's face.

It was at this moment that John Storm arrived after his interview with the Canon. He drew Glory into the corridor and tried to pacify her.

"Oh, don't suppose I'm going to do hospital nursing all my life," she said. "It may be good womanly work, but I want to be a human being with a heart, and not a machine called Duty. How I hate and despise my surroundings! I'll make an end of them one of these days. Sooner or later it must come to that."

"Your life has been deranged, Glory, and that is why you disdain your surroundings. You were at the theatre last night."

"Who told you that? . . . Well, what of it? Are you one of those who think the theatre——"

"I don't object to the theatre, Glory. It is the derangement of your life I am thinking of, and if anybody is responsible for that, he is your enemy, not your friend."

"You will make me angry again, as you did before," and she began to bite her quivering lip.

"I did not come to make you angry, Glory; I came to ask you, even to entreat you, to break off this hateful connection."

"Because you know nothing of this—this connection, as you say—you call it hateful."

"I know what I am talking about, my child. The life these men live is worse than hateful, and it makes my heart bleed to see you falling a victim to it."

"You are degrading me again. You are always degrading me. Other men try to be agreeable to me, but you . . . Besides, I cannot hear my friends abused. Yes, they *are* my friends. I *was* at the theatre with them last night, and I am going to take tea at their chambers on my next holiday. So please——"

"Glory!"

With one plunge of his arm he had gripped her by the wrist.

"You are hurting me."

"You are never to set foot in the rooms of those men."

"Let me go."

"You are inexperienced as a child, Glory, and it is my duty to protect you against yourself."

"Let go, I say!"

"Don't destroy yourself. Think while there's time; think of your good name, your character."

"I shall do as I please."

"Listen! If I have chosen to be a clergyman, it's not because I've lived all my life in cotton-wool. Let me tell you what the lives of such men really are—the best of them, the very best. He gets up at noon, walks in the Park, takes tea with someone, grunts and groans that he must go to somebody's dinner-party, escapes to the Gaiety Theatre, sups at a so-called club——"

"You mean Lord Robert, but what right have you to say——"

"The right of one who knows him to be as bad as this, and worse—ten times worse. Such a man thinks he has a right to play with a girl if she is poor. She

may stake her soul, her salvation, but he risks nothing. To-day he trifles with her, to-morrow he marries another, and flings her to the devil."

"There's something else in this. What is it?"

But John Storm had swung about and left her.

As soon as she was at liberty Glory went in search of Polly Love, expecting to find her in her cubicle, but the cubicle was empty. Coming out of the little room she saw a piece of paper lying on the floor. It was a letter, carefully folded. She picked it up, unfolded it, and read it, hardly knowing what she was doing, for her head was dizzy and her eyes were swimming in unshed tears. It ran—

"You ask, do I mean to adopt entirely? Yes, to bring up just the same as if it were born to me. I hope yours will be a strong and healthy boy, but if it is a girl——"

Glory could not understand what she was reading. Whose letter could it be? It was addressed "X.Y.Z., office of *Morning Post.*"

There was a hurried footstep approaching, and Polly came in, with her eyes on the ground as if looking for something she had dropped. At the next moment she had snatched the letter out of Glory's hand and was saying—

"What are you doing in my room? Has your friend the chaplain told you to spy upon me?"

The expression on her face was appalling, and Glory, who had flushed up with shame, turned away without a word.

When John Storm got back to his room he found the following letter from the Canon on his table:—

"Since our interview of this morning (so strangely abridged) I have had the honour to visit your dear uncle, the Prime Minister, and he agrees with me that the strain of your recent examinations and the anxieties of a new occupation have probably disturbed your health, and that it will be prudent of you to take a short vacation. I have therefore the greatest pleasure in assuring you that you are free from duty for a week, a fortnight, or a month, as your convenience may determine, and during your much-regretted absence I will do my best to sustain the great loss of your invaluable help."

On reading the message John Storm flung himself into a chair and burst into a long peal of bitter laughter. But when the laughter was spent there came a sense of great loneliness. Then he remembered Mrs. Callender, and went across to her little house in Victoria Square, showed her the Canon's letter, and told her everything.

"Lies, lies, lies!" she said. "Ah, laddie, laddie, to lie, to know you lie, to be known to lie, and yet to go on lying—that is the whole art of life with these fashionable shepherds and their fashionable flock. As for that woman —ugh! She was separated from her husband for two years before his death, and he died in a hotel abroad without kith or kin to comfort him, and now she wears his hair in a gold locket on her bosom. That's what she is! But all's well that ends well, laddie. The holly will do ye good, for you were killing yerself with work. You'll no be spending it in your little island now, eh?"

John Storm was sitting with one leg across the other, and his head on his hand and his elbow on his knee.

"I shall spend it," he said, "in retreat at the Brotherhood in Bishopsgate."

"God bless me, man, is that the change of air ye'll be going to gie yoursell? It may be well enough for men with water in their veins; but you have blood, laddie, blood! Tak' care, tak' care!"

XVI.

STILL AT MARTHA'S.

QUITE right, dear Aunt Anna, the terms "authority" and "obedience" must be known and honoured. Only when it is a case of put a penny in the slot and out comes the word of command, you can't exactly feel that way. The Board of Directors put the penny into the slot of this institution, and the word of command, so far as I am concerned, comes out of the mouth of Ward Sister Allworthy. I call her the White Owl. She is five feet ten, and has big round cheeks, which sometimes I should dearly love to slap—as mothers slap their "childers" when they administer a humiliating punishment.

So you think you notice "a certain want of aptitude?" Well, I don't think I am naturally a bad nurse, Aunt Anna. The patients like me, and they don't die of the dumps while I am about. Only I can't practise nursing by the rule of three, and as a consequence I get myself reported. Sister Allworthy has reported me three times, bless her! Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd, and now she threatens to have me up before the matron. That dear soul has difficulties of locomotion, being buried under the Pelion on Ossa of a mountain of fat. She inhabits a cave of Adullam on the edge of the Inferno *(i. e.* the "theatre") below-stairs, and has a small dog with a bad heart and broken wind always nagging on her knee. I call her the Chief Broker in Breakages and Head Dealer in Diseases, and she is only seen once a day when she

comes round to take stock. You have to be nice with her majesty, for she can haul you up at the weekly Board, and put a score against you in the black book, and send you away without a certificate. If that happens, a girl who expects to earn her living as a nurse has never any particular need to pray, "In all time of our wealth, Good Lord, deliver us."

But oh, my dear grandfather, what do you think of our John Storm now? After uttering the lamentations of Jeremiah and predicting all the plagues of Egypt, he has gone off to hold his peace, that is to say, he has gone to make his "Retreat," which being interpreted means praying without ceasing, and also without speaking, eighteen hours a day, six days at a spell, and sometimes sixty. When he comes back, reeking with all that holiness, I shall feel myself such a miserable sinner. . . .

Soberly, I could cry to think of it, though, and when I remember that perhaps I was partly to blame . . .

It was this way. In that "ter'ble discoorse" I told you he had scotched the snake, not killed it, and his vicar (I call him Mr. Worldly Wiseman), finding that his ladies and nobility went out, like the Pharisees, one by one, told our poor John he was ill and stood in need of instant rest. It looked like it, certainly, and the trouble must have been a sort of human rabies, in which the poor victim bites at his best friends first. He came here with his lower lip hanging like an old dog's, and I was so stupid as not to see that he was being hunted like a dog too, and only told myself how ugly and untidy he had grown of late. But the Sister had just before been showing me her tusks again, and being possessed with a fury, I gave it him world without end. He was very unreasonable, though, and seemed to say that I must have

no friends and no amusements that were not of his choosing, and that after spending my days walking through the inside of this precious hospital, I must spend my nights walking round the outside of it. Being a woman of like passions with himself, I had a "ter'ble dust" with him on the subject, and the next I heard was that he was going to make "Retreat" in a kind of English Church monastery somewhere in the city, where he would "try to disentangle" himself "from the world" and see what he "ought to do next." He sent me his blessing with this message, and I sent him back mine—a less holy one, but he'll make it do.

I thought you would remember Mr. Drake's mother, dear Auntie Rachel. Yes, he is fair also, and wears his hair brushed across his forehead, much as you see in the portraits of Napoleon. In fact, he is a sort of fair-haired Napoleon in nature as well.

He took me to the theatre the other evening, and that was the great event I intended to tell you about. It was quite a proper sort of place, and nobody behaved badly except Glory, who kept talking and preaching and going silly with excitement all the evening through—with the result that everybody was staring me-wards and wanting to turn me out.

Since then Mr. Drake's friend, Lord Bob, who knows all the actors on earth seemingly, has taken us "behind," and we have seen a rehearsal. Things don't look quite the same behind as before, but nothing in the world does that, and I wasn't a bit disenchanted. In fact, I found everything delightfully romantic and amusing—and really I do not think it *can* be so very wicked to be an actress. Do you?

My friend, Polly Love, was with us—Polly is a pro-

bationer also, and sleeps in the cubicle next to mine,—and after the rehearsal we went to the gentlemen's chambers to tea. I can hear what Aunt Anna is saying, "Goodness gracious! you didn't do that, girl?" Well, yes, I did, though. In the interests of my sex I wanted to see how two boys could live in rooms all by themselves, and it's perfectly shocking how well they get on without a woman. Of course I wasn't such a silly as to let wit about that; but after I had examined their sitting-room, and cross-examined its owners on its numerous photographs (chiefly feminine), and tried how it feels to hold their big pipes between one's teeth, I whipped off my hat at once and began to put things straight for them, and then I made the tea.

By this time the gentlemen had changed into their jackets, and I sent them flying around for cups and saucers and sugar basins. It turned out that they had only one teaspoon in the place, and when anybody wanted to stir her tea, she said "Will you oblige me with *the* spoon, please?" What fun it was! We laughed until we cried —at least one of us did—and eventually we managed to break the teapot and a slop basin and to overturn a standing lamp. It was perfectly delightful.

But the best sport was after tea was over, and Glory was called on for imitations of the people we had seen at the theatre. Of course she couldn't imitate a man when she was in a woman's frock, so, being as bright as diamonds that night and twice "as impudent as a white stone," * she actually conceived the idea of dressing up in man's clothes. Naturally the gentlemen were enchanted, so I hope Auntie Rachel isn't terribly shocked. Mr. Drake lent me his knickerbockers and a velvet jacket, and Polly

* A Manx proverb.

and I went into the bedroom, where she helped me to find the way to put them on. With my own blouse and my own hat (I am wearing a felt one now with a broad brim and a feather), and, *of course*, my own slippers and stockings, I made a bogh of a boy, I can tell you. I thought Polly would have died of delight in the bedroom, but when we came out, she kept covering her face and crying, "Glory, how *can* you?"

I'm afraid I sang and talked more than was good for the soul, but it was all Mr. Drake's doing. He declared I was such a marvellous mimic that it was simply a waste of time and the good gifts of God to go on hospital nursing any longer. And I do believe that if anything happened, and the need arose, he would . . .

Only fancy Glory a public person, and all the world and his wife going down on their knees to her! But then it is fearful to think of being an actress, isn't it?

After all such glorious "outs" I have to go "in" to the hospital, and then comes my fit again. Do you remember my little boy who said he was going to the angels, and he would get lots of gristly pork up there? He has gone, and I don't think I like nursing children now. Oh, how I long to go out into the world! I want to shine in it! I want to become great and glorious. I could do it too—I know I could. I have got it in me, I am sure I have. Yet here I am in a little dark corner crying for the sunshine!

How silly this is, isn't it? It sounds like madness. My dears, allow me to introduce you to someone—

GLORY QUAYLE,
March Hare and Madwoman.

XVII.

THE Board-room of the Hospital of Martha's Vineyard was a large and luxurious chamber, with an oval window at its farther end, and its two side-walls panelled with portraits of former chairmen and physicians. In great oaken arm-chairs, behind ponderous oaken tables, covered with green cloth and furnished with writing-pads, the Board of Governors sat in three sides of a square, leaving an open space in the middle. This open space was reserved for patients seeking admission or receiving discharge, and for officers of the hospital presenting their weekly reports.

On a morning in August the matron's report had closed with a startling item. It recommended the immediate suspension of a nurse on the ground of gross impropriety of conduct. The usual course in such a case was for the Board of the hospital to depute the matron to act for them in private, but the chairman in this instance was a peppery person, with a stern mouth and a solid under-jaw.

"This is a most serious matter," he said. "I think—this being a public institution—I really think the Board should investigate the case for itself. We ought to assure ourselves that—that, in fact, no other irregularity is going on in the hospital."

"May it please your lordship," said a rotund voice from one of the side-tables, "I would suggest that a case like this of grievous moral delinquency comes directly within the dispensation of the chaplain, and if he has done his duty by the unhappy girl (as no doubt he has), he must have a statement to make to the Board with regard to her."

It was Canon Wealthy.

"I may mention," he added, "that Mr. Storm has now returned to his duties and is at present in the hospital."

"Send for him," said the chairman.

When John Storm entered the Board-room, it was remarked that he looked no better for his holiday. His cheeks were thinner, his eyes more hollow, and there was a strange pallor under his swarthy skin.

The business was explained to him, and he was asked if he had any statement to make with regard to the nurse whom the matron had reported for suspension.

"No," he said, "I have no statement."

"Do you mean to tell the Board," said the chairman, "that you know nothing of this matter—that the case is too trivial for your attention—or perhaps that you have never even spoken to the girl on the subject?"

"That is so; I never have," said John.

"Then you shall do so now," said the chairman, and he put his hand on the bell beside him, and the messenger appeared.

"You cannot intend, sir, to examine the girl here," said John.

"And why not?"

"Before so many—and all of us men save one. Surely the matron——"

The Canon rose to his feet again. "My young brother is naturally sensitive, my lord, but I assure him his delicate feelings are wasted on a girl like this. He forgets that the shame lies in the girl's sin, not in her just and necessary punishment."

"Bring her in," said the chairman. The matron whispered to the messenger, and he left the room.

"Pardon me, sir," said John Storm; "if it is your ex-

pectation that I should question the nurse on her sin, as the Canon says, I cannot do so."

"Cannot?"

"Well, I will not."

"And is that your idea of your duty as a chaplain?"

"It is the matron's duty, not the chaplain's, to——"

"The matron! the matron! This is your parish, sir, your parish! A great public institution is in danger of a disgraceful scandal, and you, who are responsible for its spiritual welfare . . . Really, gentlemen——"

Again the Canon rose with a conciliatory smile. "I think I understand my young friend," said he, "and your lordship and the Board will appreciate his feelings however you may disapprove of his judgment. What generous heart cannot sympathise with the sensitive spirit of the youthful clergyman who shrinks from the spectacle of guilt and shame in a young, and perhaps beautiful, woman. But if it will relieve your lordship from an embarrassing position, I am myself willing——"

"Thank you," said the chairman, and then the girl was brought into the room in charge of Sister Allworthy.

She was holding her head down and trying to cover her face with her hands.

"Your name, girl?" said the Canon.

"Mary Elizabeth Love," she faltered.

"You are aware, Mary Elizabeth Love, that our excellent and indulgent matron" (here he bowed to a stout lady who sat in the open space) "has been put to the painful duty of reporting you for suspension, which is equivalent to your immediate discharge. Now, I cannot hold out a hope that the Board will not ratify her recommendation, but it may perhaps qualify the terms of your 'character' if you can show these gentlemen that the un-

happy lapse from good conduct which brings you to this position of shame and disgrace is due in any measure to irregularities practised perhaps within this hospital, or to the temptations of anyone connected with it."

The girl began to cry.

"Speak, nurse; if you have anything to say, the gentlemen are willing to hear it."

The girl's crying deepened into sobs.

"Useless!" said the chairman.

"Impossible!" said the Canon.

But someone suggested that perhaps the nurse had a girl friend in the hospital who could throw light on the difficult situation. Then Sister Allworthy whispered to the matron, who said, "Bring her in."

John Storm's face had assumed a fixed and absent expression, but he saw a girl of larger size than Polly Love enter the room with a gleam, as it were, of sunshine on her golden red hair. It was Glory.

There was one preliminary whispering, and then the Canon began again—

"You are a friend and companion of Mary Elizabeth Love?"

"Yes," said Glory.

Her voice was full and calm, and a look of quiet courage lit up her girlish beauty.

"You have known her other friends, no doubt, and perhaps you have shared her confidence?"

"I think so."

"Then you can tell the Board if the unhappy condition in which she finds herself is due to anyone connected with this hospital."

"I think not."

"Not to any officer, servant, or member of any school attached to it?"

"No."

"Thank you," said the chairman, "that is quite enough," and down the tables of the governors there were nods and smiles of satisfaction.

"What have I done?" said Glory.

"You have done a great service to an ancient and honourable institution," said the Canon, "and the best return the Board can make for your candour and intelligence is to advise you to avoid such companionship for the future and to flee such perilous associations."

A certain desperate recklessness expressed itself in Glory's face, and she stepped up to Polly, who was now weeping audibly, and put her arm about the girl's waist.

"What are the girl's relatives?" said the chairman.

The matron replied out of her book. Polly was an orphan, both her parents being dead. She had a brother, who had lately been a patient in the hospital, but he was only a lay helper in the Anglican monastery at Bishopsgate Street, and therefore useless for present purposes.

There was some further whispering about the tables. Was this the girl who had been recommended to the hospital by the coroner who had investigated a certain notorious and tragic case? Yes.

"I think I have heard of some poor and low relations," said the Canon; "but their own condition is probably too needy to allow them to help her at a time like the present."

Down to this moment Polly had done nothing but cry, but now she flamed up in a passion of pride and resentment.

"It's false!" she cried. "I have no poor and low re-

lations, and I want nobody's help. My friend is a gentleman—as much a gentleman as anybody here—and I can tell you his name if you like. He lives in St. James's Street, and he is Lord——"

"Stop, girl!" said the Canon in a loud voice. "We cannot allow you to compromise the honour of a gentleman by mentioning his name in his absence."

John stepped to one of the tables of the governors and took up a pamphlet which lay there. It was the last annual report of Martha's Vineyard, with a list of its governors and subscribers.

"The girl is suspended," said the chairman, and reaching for the matron's book, he signed it and returned it.

"This," said the Canon, "appears to be a case for Mrs. Callender's Maternity Home at Soho, and with the consent of the Board I will request the chaplain to communicate with that lady immediately."

John Storm had heard, but he made no answer; he was turning over the leaves of the pamphlet.

The Canon hemmed and cleared his throat. "Mary Elizabeth Love," he said, "you have brought a stain upon this honourable and hitherto irreproachable institution, but I trust and believe that ere long, and before your misbegotten child is born, you may see cause to be grateful for our forbearance and our charity. Speaking for myself, I confess it is an occasion of grief to me, and might well, I think, be a cause of sorrow to him who has had your spiritual welfare in his keeping" (here he gave a look towards John), "that you do not seem to realise the position of infamy in which you stand. We have always been taught to think of a woman as sweet and true and pure, a being hallowed to our sympathy by the most sacred associations and endeared to our love by the tenderest

ties, and it is only right" (the Canon's voice was breaking), "it is only right, I say, that you should be told at once and in this place, though tardily and too late, that for the woman who wrongs that great ideal, as you have wronged it, there is but one name known among persons of good credit and good report—a hard name, a terrible name, a name of contempt and loathing—the name of *prostitute*."

Crushing the pamphlet in his hand, John Storm had taken a step towards the Canon, but he was too late. Someone was there before him. It was Glory. With her head erect and her eyes flashing she stood between the weeping girl and the black-coated judge, and everybody could see the swelling and heaving of her bosom.

"How dare you!" she cried. "You say you have been taught to think of a woman as sweet and pure. Well, *I* have been taught to think of a *man* as strong and brave, and tender and merciful to every living creature, but most of all to a woman if she is erring and fallen. But you are not brave and tender; you are cruel and cowardly, and I despise you and hate you!"

The men at the tables were rising from their seats.

"Oh, you have discharged my friend," she said, "and you may discharge me too if you like—if you *dare!* But I will tell everybody that it was because I would not let you insult a poor girl with a cruel and shameful name, and trample upon her when she was down. And everybody will believe me, because it is the truth; and anything else you may say will be a lie, and all the world will know it!"

The matron was shambling up also.

"How dare you, Miss! Go back to your ward this instant! Do you know whom you are speaking to?"

"Oh, it's not the first time I've spoken to a clergyman, ma'am. I'm the daughter of a clergyman, and the granddaughter of a clergyman, and I know what a clergyman is when he is brave and good, and gentle and merciful to all women, and when he is a man and a gentleman—not a Pharisee and a crocodile!"

"Please, take that girl away," said the chairman.

But John Storm was by her side in a moment.

"No, sir," he said, "nobody shall do that."

But now Glory had broken down too, and the girls, like two lost children, were crying on each other's breasts. John opened the door, and led them up to it.

"Take your friend to her room, nurse; I shall be with you presently."

Then he turned back to the chairman, still holding the crumpled pamphlet in his hand, and said calmly and respectfully—

"And now that you have finished with the woman, sir, may I ask what you intend to do with the man?"

"What man?"

"Though I did not feel myself qualified to sit in judgment on the broken heart of a fallen girl, I happen to know the name which she was forbidden to mention, and I find it here, sir—here in your list of subscribers and governors."

"Well, what of it?"

"You have wiped the girl out of your books, sir. Now I ask you to wipe the man out also."

"Gentlemen," said the chairman, rising, "the business of the Board is at an end."

XVIII.

JOHN STORM wrote a letter to Mrs. Callender, explaining Polly Love's situation, and asking her to call on the girl immediately; and then he went out in search of Lord Robert Ure at the address he had discovered in the report.

He found the man alone on his arrival, but Drake came in soon afterwards. Lord Robert received him with a chilly bow; Drake offered his hand coldly; neither of them requested him to sit.

"You are surprised at my visit, gentlemen," said John, "but I have just now been present at a painful scene, and I thought it necessary that you should know something about it."

Then he described what had occurred in the Board-room, and in doing so dwelt chiefly on the abjectness of the girl's humiliation. Lord Robert stood by the window rapping a tune on the window-pane, and Drake sat in a low chair with his legs stretched out and his hands in his trouser-pockets.

"But I am at a loss to understand why you have thought it necessary to come here to tell that story," said Lord Robert.

"Lord Robert," said John, "you understand me perfectly."

"Excuse me, Mr. Storm, I do not understand you in the least."

"Then I will not ask you if you are responsible for the girl's position."

"Don't."

"But I will ask you a simpler and easier question."

"What is it?"

"When are you going to marry her?"

Lord Robert burst into ironical laughter, and faced round to Drake.

"Well, these men—these curates—their assurance, don't you know. . . . May I ask your reverence, what is *your* position in this matter—your standing, don't you know?"

"That of chaplain of the hospital."

"But you say she has been turned out of it."

"Very well, Lord Robert, merely that of a man who intends to protect an injured woman."

"Oh, I know," said Lord Robert drily; "I understand these heroics. I've heard of your sermons, Mr. Storm—your interviews with ladies, and so forth."

"And I have heard of your doings with girls," said John. "What are you going to do for this one?"

"Exactly what I please."

"Take care. You know what the girl is. It's precisely such girls. . . . At this moment she is tottering on the brink of hell, Lord Robert. If anything further should happen—if you should disappoint her . . . she is looking to you and building up hopes—if she should fall still lower and destroy herself body and soul——"

"My dear Mr. Storm, please understand that I shall do everything or nothing for the girl exactly as I think well, don't you know, without the counsel or coercion of any clergyman."

There was a short silence, and then John Storm said quietly, "It is no worse than I expected. But I had to hear it from your own lips, and I have heard it. Good-day."

He went back to the hospital and asked for Glory. She was banished with Polly to the housekeeper's room. Polly was catching flies on the window (which over-

looked the Park) and humming "Sigh no more, ladies." Glory's eyes were red with weeping. John drew Glory aside.

"I have written to Mrs. Callender, and she will be here presently," he said.

"It is useless," said Glory. "Polly will refuse to go. She expects Lord Robert to come for her, and she wants me to call on Mr. Drake."

"But I have seen the man myself."

"Lord Robert?"

"Yes. . . . He will do nothing."

"Nothing!"

"Nothing, or worse than nothing."

"Impossible!"

"Nothing of that kind is impossible to men like those."

"They are not so bad as that, though; and even if Lord Robert is all you say, Mr. Drake——"

"They are friends and housemates, Glory, and what the one is the other must be also."

"Oh, no; Mr. Drake is quite a different person."

"Don't be misled, my child. If there were any real difference between them——"

"But there is; and if a girl were in trouble or wanted help in anything——"

"He would drop her, Glory, like an old lottery ticket that has drawn a blank and is done for."

She was biting her lip, and it was bleeding slightly.

"You dislike Mr. Drake," she said, "and that is why you cannot be just to him. But he is always praising and excusing you, and when anyone——"

"His praises and excuses are nothing to me. I am not thinking of myself. I am thinking——"

He had a look of intense excitement, and his speaking was abrupt and disconnected.

"You were splendid this morning, Glory, and when I think of the girl who defied that Pharisee being perhaps herself the victim . . . The man asked me what my standing was, as if that . . . But if I had really had a right, if the girl had been anything to me, if she had been somebody else, and not a light, shallow, worthless creature, do you know what I should have said to him? 'Since things have gone so far, sir, you must marry the girl now, and keep to her, and be faithful to her, and love her, or else I——' "

"You are flushed and excited, and there is something I do not understand——"

"Promise me, Glory, that you will break off this bad connection."

"You are unreasonable. I cannot promise."

"Promise that you will never see these men again."

"But I must see Mr. Drake at once and arrange about Polly."

"Don't mention the man's name again; it makes my blood boil to hear you speak it."

"But this is tyranny, and you are worse than the Canon, and I cannot bear it."

"Very well; as you will. It's of no use struggling. . . . What is the time?"

"Six o'clock nearly."

"I must see the Canon before he goes to dinner."

His manner had changed suddenly. He looked crushed and benumbed.

"I am going now," he said, turning aside.

"So soon? When shall I see you again?"

"God knows . . . I mean . . . I don't know," he answered in a helpless way.

He was looking around as if taking a mental farewell of everything.

"But we cannot part like this," she said. "I think you like me a little still, and——"

Her supplicating voice made him look up into her face for a moment. Then he turned away, saying "Goodbye, Glory." And with a look of utter exhaustion he went out of the room.

Glory walked to a window at the end of the corridor, that she might see him when he crossed the street. There was just a glimpse of his back as he turned the corner with a slow step and his head on his breast. She went back crying.

"I could fancy a fresh herring for supper, dear," said Polly. "What do you say, housekeeper?"

John Storm went back to the Canon's house a crushed and humiliated man. "I can do no more," he thought. "I will give it up." His old influence with Glory must have been lost. Something had come between them—something or someone. "Anyhow, it is all over, and I must go away somewhere."

To go on seeing Glory would be useless. It would also be dangerous. As often as he was face to face with her he wanted to lay hold of her and say, "You must do this and this, because it is my wish and direction and command, and it is *I* that say so." In the midst of God's work how subtle were the temptations of the devil!

But with every step that he went plodding home there came other feelings. He could see the girl quite plainly, her fresh young face, so strong and so tender, so full of humour and heart's love, and all the sweet beauty of her

form and figure. Then the old pain in his breast came back again, and he began to be afraid.

"I will take refuge in the Church," he thought. In prayer and penance and fasting he would find help and consolation. The Church was peace—peace from the noise of life, and strength to fight and to vanquish. But the Church must be the Church of God—not of the world, the flesh, and the devil."

"Ask the Canon if he can see me immediately," said John Storm to the footman, and he stood in the hall for the answer.

The Canon had taken tea that day in the study with his daughter Felicity. He was reclining on the sofa, propped up with velvet cushions, and holding the teacup and saucer like the wings of a butterfly in both hands.

"We have been deceived, my dear" (sip, sip), "and we must pay the penalty of the deception. Yet we have nothing to blame ourselves for—nothing whatever. Here was a young man from heaven knows where, bent on entering the diocese. True, he was merely the son of a poor lord who had lived the life of a hermit, but he was also the nephew, and presumably the heir, of the Prime Minister of England." (Sip, sip, sip.) "Well, I gave him his title. I received him into my house. I made him free of my family—and what is the result? He has disregarded my instructions, antagonised my supporters, and borne himself towards me with an attitude of defiance, if not disdain."

Felicity poured out a second cup of tea for her father, sympathised with him, and set forth her own grievances. The young man had no conversation, and his reticence was quite embarrassing. Sometimes when she had friends and asked him to come down, his silence—well, really——

"We might have borne with these little deficiencies, my dear, if the Prime Minister had been deeply interested. But he is not. I doubt if he has ever seen his nephew since that first occasion. And when I called at Downing Street about the time of the sermon, he seemed entirely undisturbed. 'The young man is in the wrong place, my dear Canon; send him back to me.' That was all."

"Then why don't you do it?" said Felicity.

"It is coming to that, my child; but blood is thicker than water, you know, and after all——"

It was at this moment the footman entered the room to ask if the Canon could see Mr. Storm.

"Ah, the man himself!" said the Canon, rising. "Jenkyns, remove the tray." Dropping his voice, "Felicity, I will ask you to leave us together. After what occurred this morning at the hospital anything like a scene . . ." Then aloud, "Bring him in, Jenkyns. . . . Say something, my dear. Why don't you speak? . . . Come in, my dear Storm. You'll see to that matter for me, Felicity. Thanks, thanks! Sorry to send you off, but I'm sure Mr. Storm will excuse you. Good-bye for the present."

Felicity went out as John Storm came in. He looked excited, and there was an expression of pain in his face.

"I am sorry to disturb you, but I need not detain you long," he said.

"Sit down, Mr. Storm, sit down," said the Canon, returning to the sofa.

But John did not sit. He stood by the chair vacated by Felicity, and kept beating his hat on the back of it.

"I have come to tell you, sir, that I wish to resign my curacy."

The Canon glanced up with a stealthy expression and

thought, "How clever of him! To resign before he is told plainly that he has to go—that is very clever."

Then he said aloud, "I am sorry, very sorry. I'm always sorry to part with my clergy. Still—you see I am entirely frank with you—I have observed that you have not been comfortable of late, and I think you are acting for the best. When do you wish to leave me?"

"As soon as convenient—as early as I can be spared."

The Canon smiled condescendingly. "That need not trouble you at all. With a staff like mine, you see ... Of course you are aware that I am entitled to three months' notice?"

"Yes."

"But I will waive it; I will not detain you. Have you seen your uncle on the subject?"

"No."

"When you do so, please say that I always try to remove impediments from a young man's path if he is uncomfortable—in the wrong place, for example."

"Thank you," said John Storm, and then he hesitated a moment before stepping to the door.

The Canon rose and bowed affably. "Not an angry word," he thought. "Who shall say that blood does not count for something?"

"Believe me, my dear Storm," he said aloud, "I shall always remember with pride and pleasure our early connection. Perhaps I think you are acting unwisely, even foolishly, but it will continue to be a source of satisfaction to me that I was able to give you your first opportunity, and if your next curacy should chance to be in London, I trust you will allow us to maintain the acquaintance."

John Storm's face was twitching and his pulses were

beating violently, but he was trying to control himself.

"Thank you," he said; "but it is not very likely——"

"Don't say you are giving up orders, dear Mr. Storm, or perhaps that you are only leaving our Church in order to unite yourself to another. Ah! have I touched on a tender point? You must not be surprised that rumours have been rife. We cannot silence the tongues of busybodies and mischief-makers, you know. And I confess, speaking as your spiritual head and adviser, it would be a source of grief to me if a young clergyman who has eaten the bread of the Establishment, and my own as well, were about to avow himself the subject and slave of an Italian bishop."

John Storm came back from the door.

"What you are saying, sir, requires that I should be plain-spoken. In giving up my curacy I am not leaving the Church of England, I am only leaving you."

"I am so glad, so relieved."

"I am leaving you because I cannot live with you any longer, because the atmosphere you breathe is impossible to me, because your religion is not my religion or your God my God!"

"You surprise me. What have I done?"

"A month ago I asked you to set your face as a clergyman against the shameful and immoral marriage of a man of scandalous reputation, but you refused; you excused the man and sided with him. This morning you thought it necessary to investigate in public the case of one of that man's victims, and you sided with the man again—you denied to the girl the right even to mention the scoundrel's name."

"How differently we see things! Do you know I

thought my examination of the poor young thing was merciful to the point of gentleness. And that I may tell you—notwithstanding the female volcano who came down on me—was the view of the Board and of his lordship the chairman."

"Then I am sorry to differ from them. I thought it unnecessary and unmanly and brutal, and even blasphemous."

"Mr. Storm! Do you know what you are saying?"

"Perfectly, and I came to say it."

His eyes were wild, his voice was hoarse; he was like a man breaking the bonds of a tyrannical slavery.

"You called that poor child a prostitute because she had wasted the good gifts which God had given her. But God has given good gifts to you also—gifts of intellect and eloquence with which you might have raised the fallen and supported the weak, and defended the down-trodden and comforted the broken-hearted—and what have you done with them? You have bartered them for benefices, and peddled them for popularity; you have given them in exchange for money, for houses, for furniture, for things like this—and this—and this. You have sold your birthright for a mess of pottage, therefore *you* are the prostitute."

"You're not yourself, sir; leave me," and crossing the room the Canon touched the bell.

"Yes, ten thousand times more the prostitute than that poor fallen girl with her taint of blood and will. There would be no such women as she is to fall victims to evil companionship if there were no such men as you are to excuse their betrayers and to side with them. Who is most the prostitute—the woman who sells her body or the man who sells his soul?"

"You're mad, sir! But I want no scene——"

"You are the worst prostitute on the streets of London, and yet you are in the Church, in the pulpit, and you call yourself a follower of the One who forgave the woman and shamed the hypocrites, and had not where to lay His head!"

But the Canon had faced about and fled out of the room.

The footman came in answer to the bell, and finding no one but John Storm, he told him that a lady was waiting for him in a carriage at the door.

It was Mrs. Callender. She had come to say that she had called at the hospital for Polly Love and the girl had refused to go to the home at Soho.

"But whatever's amiss with ye, man?" she said. "You might have seen a ghost!"

He had come out bareheaded, carrying his hat in his hand.

"It's all over," he said. "I've waited weeks and weeks for it, but it's over at last. It was of no use mincing matters, so I spoke out."

His red eyes were ablaze, but a great load seemed to be lifted off his mind, and his soul seemed to exult.

"I have told him I must leave him, and I am to go immediately. The disease was dire and the remedy had to be dire also."

The old lady was holding her breath and watching his flushed face with strained attention.

"And what may ye be going to do now?"

"To become a religious in something more than the name; to leave the world altogether, with its idleness and pomp and hypocrisy and unreality."

"Get yoursel some flesh on your bones first, man. It's

easy to see ye've no been sleeping or eating these days and days together."

"That's nothing—nothing at all. God cannot take half your soul. You must give yourself entirely."

"Eh, laddie, laddie, I feared me this was what ye were coming till. But a man cannot bury himsel before he is dead. He may bury the half of himsel, but is it the better half? What of his thoughts—his wandering thoughts? Choose for yoursel, though, and if you must go—if you must hide yoursel for ever, and this is the last I'm to see of ye . . . ye may kiss me, laddie—I'm old enough, surely . . . Go on James, man; what for are ye sitting up there staring?"

When John Storm returned to his room he found a letter from Parson Quayle. It was a good-natured, cackling epistle, full of sweet nothings about Glory and the hospital, about Peel and the discovery of ancient runes in the graveyards of the treen chapels, but it closed with this postscript:—

"You will remember old Chalse, a sort of itinerant beggar and the privileged pet of everybody. The silly old gawk has got hold of your father, and has actually made the old man believe that you are bewitched! Someone has put the evil eye on you—some woman, it would seem, and that is the reason why you have broken away and behaved so strangely! It is most extraordinary. That such a foolish superstition should have taken hold of a man like your father is really quite astonishing: but if it will only soften his rancour against you and help to restore peace, we may perhaps forgive the distrust of Providence and the outrage on common-sense. All's well that ends well, you know, and we shall all be happy."

XIX.

MARTHA'S.

LOST, STOLEN, OR STRAYED—a man, a clergyman, answers to the name of John Storm. Or rather he does not answer, having allowed himself to be written to twice without making so much as a yap or a yowl by way of reply. Last seen six days ago, when he was suffering from the sulks, after being in a de'il of a temper with a helpless and innocent maiden who "doesn't know nothin" that can have given him offence. Anyone giving information of his welfare and whereabouts to the said H. and I. M. will be generously and appropriately rewarded.

But soberly, my dear John Storm, what has become of you? Where are you, and whatever have you been doing since the day of the dreadful inquisition? Frightful rumours are flying through the air like knives, and they cut and wound a poor girl woefully. Therefore be good enough to reply by return of post—and in person.

Meantime please accept it as a proof of my eternal regard that, after two knock-down blows received in silence, I am once more coming up smiling. Know then that Mr. Drake has justified all expectations, having compelled Lord Robert to provide for Polly, who is now safely ensconced in her own country castle somewhere in St. John's Wood, furnished to hand with servants and vassals complete. Thus you will be charmed to observe in me the growth of the prophetic instinct, for you will remember my positive prediction, that if a girl were in trouble, and the necessity arose, Mr. Drake would be the first to help her. Of course he had a great deal to say that was as sweet as syrup on the loyalty of my own friendship also, and he expended much beautiful rhetoric on your-

self as well. It seems that you are one of those who follow the impulse of the heart entirely, while the rest of us divide our allegiance with the head; and if you display sometimes the severity of a tyrant of our sex, that is only to be set down as another proof of your regard, and of the elevation of the pedestal whereon you desire us to be placed. Thus he reconciles me to the harmony of the universe and makes all things easy and agreeable.

This being the case, I have now to inform you that Polly's baby has come, having hastened his arrival (it is a man, bless it!) owing either to the tears or the terrors of the crocodile. And being on night duty now, and therefore at liberty from 6.30 to 8.30, I intend to pay him my first call of ceremony this evening, when anybody else would be welcome to accompany me who might be willing to come to his shrine of innocence and love in the spirit of the wise men of the East. But lest anybody *should* inquire for me at the hospital at the first of the hours aforesaid, this is to give warning that the White Owl has expressly forbidden all intercourse between the members of her staff and the discharged and dishonoured mother. Set it down to my spirit of contradiction that I intend to disregard the mandate, though I am only too well aware that the poor discharged and dishonoured one has no other idea of friendship than that of a loyalty in which she shares but is not sharing. Of course woman is born to such selfishness as the sparks fly upward; but if I should ever meet with a man who isn't, I will just give myself up to him, body and soul and belongings, unless he has a wife or other encumbrance already and is booked for this world, and in that event I will enter into my own recognisances and be bound over to him for the next.

GLORY.

At 6.30 that evening Glory stood waiting in the portico of the hospital, but John Storm did not come. At 7 she was ringing at the bell of a little house in St. John's Wood that stood behind a high wall and had an iron grating in the garden door. The bell was answered by a good-natured, slack-looking servant, who was friendly, and even familiar in a moment.

"Are you the young lady from the hospital? The Missis told me about you. I'm Liza, and come upstairs. . . . Yes, doing nicely, thank you, both of 'em is—and mind your head, Miss."

Polly was in a little bandbox of a bedroom, looking more pink and white than ever against the linen of her frilled pillow-slips. By the bedside a woman of uncertain age in deep mourning, with little twinkling eyes and fat cheeks, was rocking the baby on her knee and babbling over it in words of maudlin endearment.

"Bless it, 'ow it do notice! Boo-loo-loo!"

Glory leaned over the little one and pronounced it the prettiest baby she had ever seen.

"Syme 'ere, Miss. There ain't sech another in all London! It's jest the sort of baby you can love. Pore little thing, it's quite took to me already, as if it wanted to enkirridge you, my dear."

"This is Mrs. Jupe," said Polly, "and she's going to take baby to nurse."

"Boo-loo-loo-loo! And a nice new cradle's awaiting of it afront of the fire in my little back-parlour. Boo-loo!"

"But surely you're never going to part with your baby!" said Glory.

"Why, what do you suppose, dear? Do you think I'm going to be tied to a child all my days, and never

be able to go anywhere or do anything or amuse myself at all?"

"Jest that. It'll be to our mootual benefit, as I said when I answered your advertisement."

Glory asked the woman if she was married and had any children of her own.

"Me, Miss? I've been married eleven years, and I've allwiz prayed the dear Lord to gimme childring. Got any? On'y one little girl; but I want to adopt another from the birth, so as to have something to love when my own's growd up."

Glory supposed that Polly could see her baby at any time, but the woman answered doubtfully—

"Can she see baby? Well, I would rather not, certingly. If I tyke it, I want to feel it is syme as my very own and do my dooty by it, pore thing; and if the mother were coming and going, I should allwiz feel as she 'ad the first claim."

Polly showed no interest in the conversation until Mrs. Jupe asked for the name of her "friend," in lieu of eighty pounds that were to be paid down on delivery of the child.

"Come, myke up your mind, my dear, and let me tyke it away at onct. Give me 'is name, that's good enough for me."

After some hesitation Glory gave Lord Robert's name and address, and the woman prepared the child for its departure.

"Don't tyke on so, my dear. 'Tain't sech a great crime, and many a laidy of serciety 'as done worse."

At the street door Glory asked Mrs. Jupe for her own address, and the woman gave her a card, saying if she ever wanted to leave the hospital it would be easy to help

such a fine-looking young woman as she was to make a bit of living for herself.

Polly recovered speedily from the trouble of the child's departure, and presently assumed an easy and almost patronising tone towards Glory, pretending to be amused, and even a little indignant, when asked how soon she expected to be fit for business again, and able to do without Lord Robert's assistance.

"To tell you the truth," she said, "I was as much to blame as he was. I wanted to escape from the drudgery of the hospital, and I knew he would take me when the time came."

Glory left early, vowing in her heart she would come no more. When she changed her omnibus at Piccadilly the Circus was very full of women.

"Letter for you, nurse," said the porter as she entered the hospital. It was from John Storm:—

DEAR GLORY,—I have at length decided to enter the Brotherhood at Bishopsgate Street, and I am to go into the monastery this evening. It is not as a visitor that I am going this time, but as a postulant or novice, and in the hope of becoming worthy in due course to take the vows of life-long consecration. Therefore I am writing to you probably for the last time, and parting from you perhaps for ever.

Since we came up to London together I have suffered many shocks and disappointments, and I seem to have been torn in ribbons. My cherished dreams have proved to be delusions; the palaces I had built up for myself have turned out to be pasteboard, gilt, and rubbish; I have been robbed of all my jewels, or they have shown themselves to be shingle stones. In this condition of

shame and disillusionment I am now resolved to escape at the same time from the world and from myself, for I am tired of both alike, and already I feel as if a great weight had been lifted off me.

But I wish to speak of you. You must have thought me cantankerous, and so I have been sometimes, but always by conviction and on principle. I could not countenance the fashionable morality that is corrupting the manhood of the laity, or endure the toleration that is making the clergy thoroughly wicked. I could not without a pang see you cater to the world's appetites or be drawn into its gaieties and frivolities; and it was agony to me to fear that a girl of your pure if passionate nature might perhaps fall a victim to a gamester in life's follies—an actor indulging a pastime—a mere cheat.

And what you tell me of your friend's altered circumstances does not relieve me of such anxieties. The man who has deceived a girl once is likely to deceive her again. Short of marriage itself, such connections should be cut off entirely, whatever the price. When they are maintained in relations of liberty, the victim is sure to be further victimised, and her last state is always worse than the first.

However, I do not wish to blame anybody, least of all you, who have done everything for the best, and especially now when I am parting from you for ever. You have never realised how much you have been to me, and I doubt if I knew it myself until to-day. You know how I was brought up—with a solitary old man—God be with him—who tried to be good to me for the sake of his ambitions, and to love me for the sake of his revenge. I never knew my mother, I never had a sister, and I can never have a wife. You were all three to me, and your-

self besides. There were no women in our household, and you stood for woman in my life. I have never told you this before, but now I tell it as a dying man whispers his secret with his parting breath.

I have written my letters of farewell—one to my father, asking his forgiveness if I have done him any wrong, one to my uncle with my love and thanks, and one to your good old grandfather, giving up my solemn and sacred trust of you. My conduct will, of course, be condemned as weak and foolish from many points of view; but by my departure some difficulties will be removed, and for the rest I have come to see that everything is done by the spirit and nothing by the flesh, and that by prayer and fasting I can help and protect you more than by counsel and advice. Thus everything is for the best.

The Rule under which the Brothers live in community forbids them to write and receive letters without special permission, or even to think too constantly of the world outside; and now that I am on the eve of that new life, memories of the old one keep crowding on me as on a drowning man. But they are all of one period—the days when we were at Peel in your sweet little island, before the vain and cruel world came in between us, when you were a simple, merry girl, and I was little more than a happy boy, and we went plunging and laughing through your bright blue sea together.

But earth's joys grow very dim and its glories are fading. That also is for the best. I have my Koh-i-noor —my desire to depart and surrender my life to God.

JOHN STORM.

"Anything wrong, nurse? Feeling ill, ain't ye? Only dizzy a bit? Unpleasant news from home, perhaps?"

"No, something else. Let me sit in your room, porter."

She read the letter again and again, until the words seemed blurred and the lines irregular as a spider's web. Then she thought, "We cannot part for ever like this. I must see him again, whatever happens. Perhaps he has not yet gone."

It was now half-past eight and time to go on duty, but she went upstairs to Sister Allworthy and asked for an hour's further leave. The request was promptly refused. She went downstairs to the matron, and asked for half-an-hour only that she might see a friend away on a long journey, and that was refused too. Then she tightened her quivering lips, returned to the porter's room, fixed her bonnet on before the scratched pierglass, and boldly walked out of the hospital.

It was now quite dark and the fashionable dinner-hour of Belgravia, and as she hurried through the streets many crested and coroneted carriages drew up at the great mansions and discharged their occupants in evening dress. The Canon's house was brilliantly lighted, and when the door was opened in answer to her knock, she could see the Canon himself at the head of his own detachment of diners coming downstairs with a lady in white silk chatting affably on his arm.

"Is Mr. Storm at home?"

The footman, in powdered wig and white cotton gloves, answered haltingly, "If it is—er—anything about the hospital, Miss, Mr.—er—Golightly will attend."

"No, it is Mr. Storm himself I wish to see."

"Gorn!" said the footman, and he shut the door in her face.

She had an impulse to hammer on the door with her hand, and command the flunkey to go down on his knees

and beg her pardon. But what was the good? She had no time to think of herself now.

As a last resource she would go to Bishopsgate. How dense the traffic seemed to be at Victoria! She had never felt so helpless before.

It was better in the City, and as she walked eastward in the direction indicated by a policeman, every step brought her into quieter streets. She was now in that part of London which is the world's busiest market-place by day but is shut up and deserted at night. Her light footsteps echoed against the shutters of the shops. The moon had risen and she could see far down the empty street.

She found the place at last. It was one of London's weather-beaten old churches, shouldered by shops on either hand, and almost pushed back by the tide of traffic. There was an iron gate at the side, leading by an arched passage to a little courtyard which was bounded by two high blank walls, by the back wall of the church, and by the front of a large house with a small doorway and many small windows. In the middle of the courtyard there was a tree with a wooden seat round its trunk.

And being there, she felt afraid and almost wished she had not come. The church was dimly lighted, and she thought perhaps the cleaners were within. But presently there was a sound of singing, in men's voices only, and without any kind of musical accompaniment. Just then the clock in the steeple struck nine and chimes began to play—

"Days and moments quickly flying."

The singing came to an end, and there was some low inarticulate droning and then a general "Amen." The

hammer of the bell continued to beat out its hymn, and Glory stood under the shadow of the tree to collect her thoughts.

Then the sacristy door opened and a line of men came out. They were in long black cassocks, and they crossed the courtyard from the church to the house with the measured and hasty step of monks, and with their hands clasped at their breasts. Almost at the end of the line, walking with an old man whose tread was heavy, there was a younger one who was bare-headed, and who did not wear the cassock. The moon threw a light on his face, which looked pale and worn. It was John Storm.

Glory gave a faint cry, a gasp, and he turned round as if startled.

"Only the creaking of the sycamore," said the Superior. And then the mysterious shadows took them; they passed into the house, the door was closed, and she was alone with the chimes—

> "Days and moments quickly flying,
> Blend the living with the dead."

Glory's strength had deserted her, and she went away as she came. When she got back to Victoria, she felt for the first time as if her own little life had been swallowed up in the turmoil of London, and she had gone down to the cold depths of an icy sea.

It was a quarter to ten when she returned to the ward, and the matron, with her dog on her lap, was waiting to receive her.

"Didn't I tell you that you could not go out to-night?"

"Yes, ma'am," said Glory.

"Then how did you dare to go?"

Glory looked at her unwaveringly with glittering eyes that seemed to smile, whereupon the matron picked up

her dog, gathered up her train, and swept out of the ward, saying—

"Nurse, you can leave me at the end of your term, and you need never cross the doors of this institution again."

Then Glory, who had all night wanted to cry, burst into laughter. The ward Sister reproved her, but she laughed in the woman's fat face, and would have given worlds to slap it.

There was not a nurse in the hospital who showed more bright and cheerful spirits when the patients were being prepared for the night. But next morning, in the grey dawn, when she had dragged herself to bed, and was able at length to be alone, she beat the pillows with both hands and sobbed in her loneliness and shame.

XX.

But youth is rich in hope, and at noon, when Glory awoke, the thought of Drake flashed upon her like light in a dark place. He had compelled Lord Robert to assist Polly in a worse extremity, and he would assist her in her present predicament. How often he had hinted that the hospital was not good enough for her, and that some day and somewhere Fate would find other work for her and another sphere. The time had come; she would appeal to him, and he would hasten to help her.

She began to revive the magnificent dreams that had floated in her mind for months. No need to tell the people at home of her dismissal and disgrace; no need to go back to the island. She would be somebody in her own right yet. Of course she would have to study, to struggle, to endure disappointments, but she would triumph in the end. And when at length she was great and famous

she would be good to other poor girls; and as often as she thought of John Storm in his solitude, in his cell, though there might be a pang, a red stream running somewhere within, she would comfort herself with the thought that she too was doing her best, she too had her place, and it was a useful and worthy one.

Before that time came, however, there would be managers to influence and engagements to seek, and perhaps teachers to pay for. But Drake was rich and generous and powerful; he had a great opinion of her talents, and he would stop at nothing.

Leaping out of bed, she sat down at the table as she was and wrote to him.

"Dear Mr. Drake,—Try to see me to-night. I want your advice immediately. What do you think? I have got myself 'noticed' at last, and as a consequence I am to leave at the end of my term. So things are urgent, you see. I 'wave my lily hand' to you. Glory.

"*P.S.*—To save time I suggest the hour and the place: eight o'clock—St. James's Park—by the bridge going down from Marlborough House."

Drake received this note as he was sitting alone in his chambers, smoking a cigarette after drinking a cup of tea, in that hour of glamour that is between the lights. It seemed to bring with it a secret breath of passion out of the atmosphere in which it had been written. At the first impulse it went up to his lips, but at the next moment he was smitten by the memory of something, and he thought, "I will do what is right; I will play the game fair."

He dined that night with a group of Civil servants at his club in St. James's Street, but at a quarter to eight, notwithstanding some playful bantering, he put on his overcoat and turned towards the Park. The autumn night was soft and peaceful: the stars were out and the moon had risen; a fragrant mist came up from the lake, and the smoke of his cigar was hardly troubled by the breeze that pattered the withered tassels of the laburnums. Big Ben was striking eight as he reached the end of the little bridge, and almost immediately afterwards he was aware of soft and hurrying footsteps approaching him.

Glory had come down by the Mall. The whispering of the big white trees in the moonlight was like company, and she sang to herself as she walked. Her heart seemed to have gone into her heels since yesterday, for her step was light, and sometimes she ran a few paces. She arrived out of breath as the great clock was striking, and seeing the figure of a gentleman in evening dress by the end of the bridge, she stopped to collect herself.

Her hand was hot and a little damp when Drake took it, and her face was somewhat flushed. She had all at once become ashamed that she had come to ask him for anything, and she took out her pocket-handkerchief and began to roll it in her palms. He misunderstood her agitation, and trying to cover it, he offered his arm and took her across the bridge, and they turned westward down the path that runs along the margin of the lake.

"Mr. Storm has gone," she said, thinking to explain herself.

"I know," he answered.

"It is generally known, then?"

"I had a letter from him yesterday."

"Was it about me?"

"Yes."

"You must not mind if he says things, you know."

"I don't, Glory. I set them down to the egotism of the religious man. The religious man cannot believe that anybody can live a moral life and act on principle except from the religious impulse. . . . I suppose he has warned you against me, hasn't he?"

"Well—yes."

"I'm at a loss to know what I've done to deserve it. But time must justify me. I am not a religious man myself, you know, though I hate to talk of it. To tell you the truth, I think the religious idea a monstrous egotism altogether, and the love of God merely the love of self. Still, you must judge for yourself, Glory."

"Are we not wasting our time a little?" she said. "I am here—isn't that proof enough of my opinion?" And then in an agitated whisper she added, "I have only half-an-hour, the gates will be closing, and I want to ask your advice, you know. You remember what I told you in my letter?"

He patted the hand on his arm and said, "Tell me how it happened."

She told him everything, with many pauses, expecting every moment that he would break in upon her and say, "Why didn't you box the woman's ears?" or perhaps laugh and assure her that it did not matter in the least, and she was making too much of a mere bagatelle. But he listened to every syllable, and after she had finished there was silence for a moment. Then he said, "I'm sorry —very sorry; in fact, I am much troubled about it."

Her nerves were throbbing hard and her hand on his arm was twitching.

"If you had left of your own accord after that scene

in the Board-room it would have been so different—so easy for me to help you."

"How?"

"I should have gone to my chief—he is a governor of many hospitals—and said, 'A young friend of mine, a nurse, is uncomfortable in her present place and would like to change her hospital.' It would have been no sooner said than done. But now—now there is the black book against you, and God knows if . . . In fact, somebody has laid a trap for you, Glory, intending to get rid of you at the first opportunity, and you seem to have walked straight into it."

She felt stunned. "He has forgotten all he has said to me," she thought. In a feeble, expressionless voice she asked—

"But what am I to do now?"

"Let me think."

They walked some steps in silence. "He is turning it over," she thought. "He will tell me how to begin."

He stopped, as if seized by a new idea.

"Did you tell them where you had been?"

"No," she replied, in the same weak voice.

"But why not do so? There is hope in that. The chaplain was your friend—your only friend in London, so far as they know. Surely that is an extenuating circumstance so plausible——"

"But I cannot——"

"I know it is bitter to explain—to apologise—and if I can do it for you——"

"I will not allow it," she said. Her lips were set and her breath was coming through them in gusts.

"It is a pity to allow the hospitals to be closed against

you. Nursing is a good profession, Glory—even a fashionable one. It is true womanly work and———"

"That was what he said."

"Who? John Storm? He was right. Indeed he was an entirely honourable and upright man, and———"

"But *you* always seemed to say there were other things more worthy of a girl, and if she had a mind to . . . But no matter. We needn't talk about the hospitals any longer. I am not fit for them and shall never go back to them, whatever happens."

He looked down at her. She was biting her lips, and the tears were gathering in her eyes.

"Well, well, never mind, dear," he said, and he patted her hand again.

The moon had begun to wane, and out of the dark shadows they walked in they could see the lines of houses lit up all around.

"Look," she said, with a feeble laugh, "in all this great busy London is there nothing else I'm fit for?"

"You are fit for anything in the world, my dear," he answered.

Her nerves were throbbing harder than ever. "Perhaps he doesn't remember," she thought. Should she tell him what he said so often about her talents, and how much she might be able to make of them?

"Is there nothing a girl can do except go down on her knees to a woman?"

He laughed and talked some nonsense about the kneeling. "Poor little woman! she doesn't know what she is doing," he thought.

"I shouldn't mind what people thought of me," she said, "not even my own people, who have been brought up with such narrow ideas, you know. They might think

what they liked, if I felt I was in the right place at last —the right place for me, I mean."

Her nervous fingers were involuntarily clutching at his coat sleeve. "Now any other man . . ." he thought.

She began to cry. "He *won't* remember," she told herself. "It was only his way of being agreeable when he praised me and predicted such wonderful things. And now his good breeding will not allow him to tell me there are hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands of girls in London as likely to . . ."

"Come, you mustn't cry, Glory. It's not so bad as that."

She had never seemed to him so beautiful, and he wanted to take her in his arms and comfort her.

"I had no one but you to come to," she murmured in her confusion. But she was thinking, "Why didn't you stop me before? Why have you let me go on all these months?"

"I must try to think of something, and I'll speak to to my friend Rosa—Miss Macquarrie, you know."

"You are a man," said Glory, "and I thought perhaps . . ." But she could not speak of her fool's paradise now, she was so deeply ashamed and abased.

"That's just the difficulty, my dear. If I were not a man I might so easily help you."

What did he mean? The frogs kept croaking at the margin of the lake, disturbed by the sounds of their footsteps.

"Whatever you were to tell me to do I should do it," she said, in the same confused murmur. She was ruining herself with every word she uttered.

He drew up and stood before her so close that she could feel his breath on her face.

"My dear Glory," he said passionately, "don't think it

isn't terrible to me to renounce the happiness of helping you; but I must not, I dare not, I will not take it."

She could scarcely breathe for the shame that took sudden hold of her.

"Heaven knows I would give anything to have the joy of looking after your happiness, dear; but I should despise myself for ever if I took advantage of your circumstances."

Good God! what did he think she had been asking of him?

"I am thinking of yourself, Glory, because I want to esteem you and honour you, and because your good name is above everything else—everything else in the world."

Her shame was now abject. It stifled her, deafened her, blinded her. She could not speak or hear or see.

He took her hand and pressed it.

"Let me go," she stammered.

"Stay—do not go yet!"

"Let me go, will you?"

"One moment——"

But with a cry like the cry of a startled bird she disappeared in the shadow of the trees.

He stood a moment where she had left him, tingling in every nerve, wanting to follow her, and overtake her, and kiss her, and abandon everything. But he buttoned up his overcoat and turned away, telling himself that whatever another man might have done in the same case, he at least had done rightly, and that men like John Storm were wrong if they thought it was impossible to act on principle without the impulse of religion.

Meanwhile Glory was flying through the darkness, and weeping in the bitterness of her disappointment and shame. The big trees overhead were all black now, and very gaunt and grim, and the breeze was moaning in their branches.

"I had disgrace enough already," she thought; "I might have spared myself a degradation like this."

Drake had supposed that she came to plead for herself to-night as she had pleaded for Polly a week ago. How natural that he should think so! How natural, and yet how hideous!

"I hate him! I hate him!" she thought.

John Storm had been right. In their heart of hearts these men of society had only one idea about a girl, and she had stumbled on it unawares. They never thought of her as a friend and an equal, but only as a dependant and a plaything, to be taken or left as they liked.

"Oh, how shameful to be a woman! how shameful, how shameful!"

And Drake had renounced her! In the hideous tangle of his error he had renounced her! For honour's sake, and her own sake, and for the sake of his character as a gentleman—renounced her! Oh, there was somebody who would never have renounced her whatever had happened, and yet she had driven him away, and he was gone for ever.

"I hate myself! I hate myself!"

She remembered how often out of recklessness and daring and high spirits, but without a thought of evil, she had broken through the barrier of manners, and given Drake occasion to think lightly of her—at the ball, at the theatre, at tea in his chambers, and by dressing herself up as a man.

"I hate myself! I hate myself!"

John Storm was right, and Drake in his different way was right too, and she alone had been to blame. But Fate was laughing at her, and the jest was very, very cruel.

"No matter. It is all for the best," she thought. She

would be the stronger for this experience—the stronger and the purer too, to stand alone and to face the future.

She got back to the hospital just as the great clock of Westminster was chiming the half-hour, and she stood a moment on the steps to listen to it. Only half-an-hour had passed, and yet all the world had changed!

XXI.

It was the last day of Glory's probation, and, dressed in the long blue ulster in which she came from the Isle of Man, she was standing in the matron's room waiting for her wages and discharge. The matron was sitting sideways at her table, with her dog snarling in her lap. She pointed to a tiny heap of gold and silver and to a foolscap paper which lay beside it.

"That is your month's salary, nurse, and that is your 'character.' The 'character' has given me a deal of trouble. I have done all I could for you. I have said you were bright and cheerful, and that the patients liked you. I trust I have not committed myself too far."

Glory gathered up the money, but left the "character" untouched.

"You need not be anxious, ma'am; I shall not require it."

"Have you got a situation?"

"No."

"Then where are you going next?"

"I don't know—yet."

"How much money have you saved?"

"About three months' wages."

"Only three pounds altogether!"

"It will be quite sufficient."

"What friends have you got in London?"

"None—that is to say—no, none whatever."

"Then why don't you go back to your island?"

"Because I don't wish to be a burden upon my people, and because earning my living in London doesn't depend on the will or the whim of any woman."

"That's just like you. I might have dismissed you instantly, but, for the sake of the chaplain, I've borne with your rudeness and irregularities, and even tried to be your friend, and yet . . . I daresay you've not even told your people why you are leaving the hospital."

"I haven't—I haven't told them yet that I'm leaving at all."

"Then I've a great mind to do it for you. A venturesome, headstrong girl who flings herself on London is in danger of ruin."

"You needn't trouble yourself, ma'am," said Glory, opening the door to go.

"Why so?" said the matron.

Glory stood at her full height and answered—

"Because if you said that of me, there is nobody in the world would believe you."

Her box had been brought down to the hall, and the porter, who wished to be friendly, was cording it.

"May I leave it in your care, porter, until I am able to call for it?"

"Certingly, nurse. Sorry you're goin'. I'll miss your face, too."

"Thank you. I'll call for my letters also."

"There's one just come."

It was from Aunt Anna, and was full of severe reproof and admonition. Glory was not to think of leaving the hospital; she must try to be content with the condition to which God had called her. But why had her

letters been so few of late? and how did it occur that she had never told them about Mr. Storm? He had gone for good into that strange Brotherhood, it seemed. Not Catholic, and yet a monastery. Most extraordinary! They were all eagerly waiting to hear more about it; besides, the grandfather was anxious on Glory's account. If half they heard was true, the dangers of London . . .

The house-surgeon came down to say good-bye. He had always been as free and friendly as Sister Allworthy would allow. They stood a moment at the door together.

"Where are you going to?" he asked.

"Anywhere—nowhere—everywhere; to 'all the airts the wind can blaw.'"

It was a clear bright morning with a light keen frost. On looking out, Glory saw that flags were flying on the public buildings.

"Why, what's going on?" she said.

"Don't you know? It's the 9th of November—Lord Mayor's Day."

She laughed merrily. "A good omen. I'm the female Dick Whittington! Here goes for it! Good-bye, hospital nursing. Bye-bye, doctor."

She dropped him a playful curtsy at the bottom of the steps, and then tripped along the street.

"What a girl it is!" he thought. "And what is to become of her in this merciless old London?"

She had taken less than a score of steps from the hospital when great blinding tear-drops leapt from her eyes and ran down her cheeks, but she only dropped her veil and walked on boldly.

SECOND BOOK.—THE RELIGIOUS LIFE.

I.

The Society of the Holy Gethsemane, popularly called the Bishopsgate Fathers, was one of the many conventual institutions of the English Church which came as a sequel to the great upheaval of religious feeling known as the Tractarian or Oxford movement. Most of them gave way under the pressure of external opposition, some of them broke down under the strain of internal dissension, and a few lived on as secret brotherhoods, in obedience to a rule which was never divulged by their members, who were said to wear a hair-shirt next the skin, and to scourge themselves with the lash of discipline.

Of these conventual institutions, the Society of the Holy Gethsemane had been one of the earliest, and it was now quite the oldest, although it had challenged not only the traditions of the Reformed Church, but the spirit of the age itself, by establishing its place of prayer at the very doors of the Stock Exchange—that crater of volcanic emotions, that generating house for the electric currents of the world.

Its founder and first Superior had been a man of iron will, who had fought his way through ecclesiastical courts and popular anger, and even family persecution, which had culminated in an effort of his own brother to shut him up as a lunatic. His first disciple and most stanch supporter had been the Rev. Charles Frederic Lamplugh, a Fellow of Corpus, newly called to orders after an earlier career which had been devoted to the

world, and, according to rumour, nearly wrecked in an affair of the heart.

When the community had proved its legal right to exist within the Establishment, and public clamour had subsided, this disciple was despatched to America, and there he established a branch brotherhood and became great and famous. At the height of his usefulness and renown he was recalled, and this exercise of authority provoked a universal outcry among his admirers. But he obeyed: he left his fame and glory in America and returned to his cell in London, and was no more heard of by the outer world, until the founder of the Society died, when he was elected by the brothers to the vacant place of Superior.

Father Lamplugh was now a man of seventy, so gentle in his manner, so sweet in his temper, so pious in his life, that, when he stepped out of his room to greet John Storm on his arrival in Bishopsgate Street, it seemed as if he brought the air of heaven in the rustle of his habit and to have come from the holy of holies.

"Welcome! welcome!" he said. "I knew you would come to us; I have been expecting you. The first time I saw you I said to myself, 'Here is one who bears a burden; the world cannot satisfy the cravings of a heart like that; he will surrender it some day.'"

Having been there before, though in "Retreat" only, John entered at once into the life of the brotherhood. It was arranged that he was to spend some two or three months as a postulant, then to take the vow of a novice for one year, and finally, if he proved his vocation, to seal and establish his calling by taking the three life vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

The home of the brotherhood was one of those old

London mansions in the heart of the city, which were built perhaps for the palaces of dignitaries of the Church, and were afterwards occupied as the houses and offices of London merchants and their apprentices, and have eventually descended to the condition of warehouses and stores, and tenement dwellings for the poor. Its structure remained the same, but the brothers made no effort to support its ancient grandeur. Nothing more simple could be imagined than the appointments of their monastery. The carved oak staircase was there, but the stairs were carpetless, and the panelled and parqueted hall was bare of ornament, except for a picture, in a pale oaken frame, of the head of Christ in its crown of thorns. A plain clock in a deal case was nailed up under the floral cornice, and beneath it there hung the text, "Lord, who shall dwell in Thy tabernacle, or who shall rest upon Thy holy hill? Even he that leadeth an uncorrupt life." The old dining-room was now the community-room, the old kitchen was the refectory, the spacious bedrooms were partitioned into cells, and the corridors, which had once been covered with tapestry, were now coated with white-wash, and bore the inscription, "Silence in the passages."

In this house of poverty and dignity, of past grandeur and present simplicity, the brothers lived in community. They were forty in number, consisting of ten lay brothers, ten novices, and twenty professed fathers. The lay brothers, who were under the special direction of their own Superior, the Father Minister, and were rarely allowed to go into the streets, had to clean the house and bake the bread, and cook and serve the food which was delivered at the door, and thus, in that narrow circle of duty, they proved their piety by their devotion to a lot which condemned them to scour and scrub to the last

day of life. The clerical brothers, who were nearly all in full orders, enjoyed a more varied existence, being confined to the precincts only during a part of their novitiate, and then sent out at the will of the Superior to preach in the churches of London or the country, and even despatched on expeditions to establish missions abroad.

The lay brothers had their separate retiring-room, but John Storm met his clerical house-mates on the night of his arrival. It was the hour of evening recreation, and they were gathered in the community-room for reading and conversation. The stately old dining-room was as destitute as the corridors of adornments or even furniture. Straw arm-chairs stood on the clean white floor, a book-case, containing many volumes of the Fathers, lined one of the panelled walls, and over the majestic fireplace there was a plain card with the inscription, "There be eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake."

The brothers gathered about him and examined him with a curiosity which was more than personal. To this group of men detached from life the arrival of someone from the outer world was an event of interest. He knew what wars had been waged, what epidemics were raging, what Governments had risen and fallen. He might not speak of these things in casual talk, for it was against rule to discuss, for its own sake, what had been seen or heard outside, but they were in the air about him, and they were happening on the other side of the wall.

And he on his part also examined his house-mates and tried to guess what manner of men they were and what had brought them to that place. They were men of all ages, and nearly every school of the Church had

sent its representatives. Here was the pale face of the ascetic and there the guileless eyes of the saint. Some were keen and alert, others were timid and slow. All wore the long black cassock of the community, and many wore the rope with three knots. They spoke little of the world outside, but it was clear that they could not dismiss it from their thoughts. Their talk was cheerful, and the Father told stories of his preaching expeditions which provoked some laughter. They had no newspapers (except one well-known High Church organ) and no games, and there was no smoking.

The bell rang for supper and they went down to the refectory. It was a large apartment in the basement, and it still bore the emblems of its ancient service. Over the great kitchen ingle there was yet another card with the inscription, "Neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common." A table scoured white ran round three sides of the room, the seats were forms without backs, and there was one chair—the Superior's chair—in the middle.

The supper consisted of porridge and milk and brown bread, and it was eaten out of plates and cans of pewter. While it lasted, one of the brothers, seated at a raised desk, read first a few passages of Scripture and then some pages of a secular book which the religious were thus hearing at their meals. The supper was hardly over when the bell rang again. It was time for Compline, the last service of the day, and the brothers formed in procession and passed out of the house across the courtyard into the little church.

The old place was dimly lighted, but the brothers occupied the chancel only. They sat in two companies

on opposite sides of the choir, in three rows of stalls, the lay brothers in front, the novices next, and the Fathers at the back. Each side had its leader in the recitation of the prayers. The Miserere was said kneeling, the Psalms were sung with frequent pauses, each of the duration of the words "Ave Maria," producing the effect of a broken wail. The service was short, and it ended with "May the Lord Almighty grant us a quiet night and a perfect end." There was another stroke of the bell and the brothers returned to the house in silence.

John Storm walked with the Superior, and passing through the courtyard, in the light of the moon that had risen while they were at prayers, he was startled by the sound of something.

"Only the creaking of the sycamore," said the Father. He had thought it was the voice of Glory, but he had been hearing her cry throughout the service, so he dismissed the circumstance as a dream. Half-an-hour later the household had retired for the night, the lights were put out, and the Society of the Gethsemane was at rest.

John's cell was on the topmost floor, next to the quarters of the lay brothers. There was nothing above it but a high lead flat, which was sometimes used by the religious as watch-tower and breathing-place. The cell was a narrow room with bare floor, a small table, one chair, a praying-stool, a crucifix, and a stump bed, having a straw pillow and a crimson coverlet marked with a large white cross.

"Here," he thought, "my journey is at an end. This is my resting-place for life." The mighty hand of the Church was on him, and he felt a deep peace. He was like a ship that had been tossed at sea and was lying quiet in harbour at last.

Without was the world, the fantastic world, for ever changing; within were gentle if strict rules and customs securely fixed. Without was the ceaseless ebb and flow of the financial tide; within were content and sweet poverty and no disturbing fears. Without were struggle and strife and the fever of gain; within were peace and happiness and the grand mysteries which God reveals to the soul in solitude.

He began to pass his life in review and to think, "Well, it is all over, at all events. I shall never leave this place. Friends who forgive me, good-bye! and foes who are unforgiving, good-bye to you too!"

And the world, the great, vain, cruel, hypocritical world, farewell to it also! Farewell to its pomp and its glory! Farewell to life and liberty and—love!

The wind was rustling the leaves of the tree in the courtyard, and he could not help but hear again the voice he had heard when crossing from the church. His eyes were closed, but Glory's face, with its curling and twitching lip and its laughing and liquid eyes, was printed on the darkness.

"Ave Maria," he murmured, and saying this again and again, he fell asleep.

Next morning the daylight had not quite dawned when he was awakened by a knock at his door, and a low voice saying, "Benedicamus Domino!"

It was the Father Superior, who made it his rule to rouse the household himself, on the principle of "Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant."

"Deo Gratias," he answered, and the voice went on through the corridor. Then the bell rang for Lauds and Prime, and John left his cell to begin his life as Brother Storm.

II.

THOUGH it was against the rule of the Order to indulge in particular friendships, yet, in obedience to the rule of Nature, he made friends among the brothers. His feeling for the Superior became stronger than love and approached to adoration, and there were certain of the Fathers to whom his heart went out with a tender sympathy. The Father Minister was a man of a hard, closed soul, very cantankerous and severe, but the rest were gentle and timid men for the most part, with a wistful outlook on the world.

It was due in part to the proximity of his cell to the quarters assigned to the lay brothers that his two closest friendships were made among them. One was with a great creature, like an overgrown boy, who kept the door to the monastery by day, and alternated that duty with another by night. He was called Brother Andrew—for the lay brothers were known by their Christian names—and he was one of those characterless beings who are only happy when they have merged their individuality in another's and joined their fate to his. He attached himself to John from the first, and as often as he was at liberty he was hanging about him, ready to fetch and carry in his shambling gait, which was like the roll of an old dog. The expression of his beardless face was that of a boy, and he had no conversation, for he always agreed with everything that was said to him.

The other of John's friendships was with the lay brother whom he had known outside, the brother of Polly Love; but this was a friendship of slower growth, impeded by a tragic obstacle. John had seen him first in the refectory on the night of his arrival, and observed in

his face the marks of suffering and exhaustion. At various times afterwards he had seen him in the church and encountered him in the corridors, and had sometimes bowed to him and smiled, but the brother had never once given sign of recognition. At length he had begun to doubt his identity, and one morning, going upstairs from breakfast side by side with the Superior, he said—

"Father, is the lay brother with the melancholy eyes and the pale face the one whom I knew at the hospital?"

"Yes," said the Father, "but he is under the rule of silence."

"Ah! Does he know what has become of his sister?"

"No."

It was the morning hour of recreation, and the Father drew John into the courtyard and talked of Brother Paul.

He was much tormented by thoughts of the world without, and being a young man of a weak nervous system and a consumptive tendency, such struggles with the evil one were hurtful to him. Therefore, though it was the rule that a lay brother should not be consecrated until after long years of service, it had been decided that he should take the vows immediately, in order that Satan might yield up his hold of him and the world might drag at him no more.

"Is that your experience?" said John. "When a religious has taken the vows are his thoughts of the world all conquered?"

"He is like the sailor making ready for his voyage. As long as he lies in harbour, his thoughts are of the home he has left behind him, but when he has once crossed the bar and is out on the ocean, he thinks only of the haven where he would be."

"But are there no backward glances, Father? The

sailor may write to the friends he has parted from—surely the religious may pray for them."

"As brothers and sisters of the spirit, yes, always and at all times; as brothers and sisters of the flesh, no, never save in hours of especial need. He is the spouse of Christ, my son, and all Christ's children are his kindred equally."

As a last word the Father begged of John to abstain from reference to anything that had happened at the hospital, lest Brother Paul might hear of it and manifold evils be the result.

The warning seemed needless. From that day forward John tried to avoid Brother Paul. In church and in the refectory he kept his eyes away from him. He could not see that worn face with its hungry look and not think of a captured eagle with a broken wing. It was with a shock that he discovered that their cells were side by side. If they came near to each other in the corridors, he experienced a kind of terror and was thankful for the rule of silence which forbade them to speak. Under the smouldering ashes there might be coals of fire which only wanted a puff to fan them into flame.

They came face to face at last. It was on the lead flat of the tower above their cells. John had grown accustomed to go there after Compline that he might look on London from that eminence and thank God that he had escaped from its clutches. The stars were out and the city lay like a great monster around and beneath. Something demoniacal had entered into his view of it. Down there was the river winding like a serpent through its sand, and here and there were the bridges like the scales across it, and farther west was the head of the great creature, just beginning to be ablaze with lights.

"She is there," he thought, and then he was startled by a sound. Had he uttered the words aloud? But it was someone else who had spoken. Brother Paul was standing by the parapet with his eyes in the same direction. When he became conscious that John was behind him, he stammered something in his confusion and then hurried away as if he had been detected in a crime.

"God pity him!" thought John. "If he only knew what has happened!"

Going back to his cell, he began to think of Glory. By the broken links of memory he remembered for the first time since coming into the monastery the condition of insecurity in which he had left her. How uncertain her position at the hospital, how perilous her relations with her friend!

The last prayer of the day for the brothers of the Gethsemane was the prayer before the crucifix by the side of the bed, "Thanks be to God for giving me the trials of this day." To this he added another petition, "And bless and protect her wheresoever she may be."

He ceased to frequent the tower after that, and did not go to it again until the morning of the day on which he was to make his vows. By this time his soul had spent itself so prodigally in prayer that he had almost begun to regard himself as one already in another world. The morning was clear and frosty, and he could see that something unusual was taking place on the earth below. Traffic was stopped, the open spaces were crowded, and processions were passing through the streets with bands of music playing and banners flying. Then he remembered what day it was—it was Lord Mayor's Day, the 9th of November—and once again he thought of Glory.

She would be there, for her heart was light and she loved the world and all its scenes of gaiety and splendour.

It was the day of his final preparation, and he was under the rule of silence, so he returned to his cell and shut the door. But he could not shut out the sounds of the streets. All day long the bands were playing and the horses prancing, and there was the tramp of many feet. And even in the last hour before the ceremony, when he was on his knees in front of the crucifix and the palms of his hands were placed against his face, he could see the gay spectacle and the surging throngs—the men, the women, the children in every window, on every parapet, and Glory in the midst of them with her laughing lips and her sparkling eyes.

Night brought peace with it at length, and then the bell rang and he went down to service. The brothers were waiting for him in the hall, and they formed into line and passed into the church; first Brother Andrew with the cross, then Brother Paul with the incense, and the other lay brothers with the candles, then the religious in their cassocks, and the Superior in his cope, and John Storm last of all.

The altar was decorated as for a feast and the service was strange but solemn. John had drawn up in writing a promise of stability and obedience, and this he placed with his own hand on the altar. Down to that moment he had worn his costume as a secular priest, but now he was to be robed in the habit of the Order.

The Father stood on the altar steps with the habit lying at his feet. He took it up and blessed it and then put it on John, saying as he bound it with the cord, "Take this cord and wear it in memory of the purity of

heart wherewith you must ever hereafter seek to abide in the love and service of our Lord Jesus."

At that moment a door was suddenly and loudly slammed, to signify that the world was being shut out, the choir said the Gloria Patri and then sang a hymn beginning—

"Farewell, thou world of sorrow,
Unrest, and schism, and strife!
I leave thee on the threshold
Of the celestial life."

It was the occasion of Brother Paul's life vows also, and as John stood back from the altar steps the lay brother was brought up to them. He was very pale and nervous, and he would have stumbled but for the help of the Father Minister and Brother Andrew, who walked on either side of him.

Then the same ceremony was gone through again, but with yet more solemn accessories. The Burial Service was read, the De Profundis was sung, the bell was tolled, the "Ecce quam bonum" was intoned, and finally the chant was chanted—

"Dead to Him, then death is over,
Dead and gone are death's dark fears."

John Storm was profoundly stirred. The heavens seemed to open and all the earth to pass away. It was difficult to believe that he was still in the flesh.

When he was able to collect himself, he was on the tower again, but in his cassock now and gripping the cord by which it was tied. The frosty air of the morning had thickened to a fog, the fog-signals were sounding, and the mighty monster below seemed to be puffing fire from a thousand nostrils and bellowing from a thousand throats.

Someone had come up to him. It was Brother Paul. He was talking nervously, and even pretending to laugh a little.

"I am so happy to see you here. And I am glad the silence is at an end and I am able to tell you so."

"Thank you," said John, and he tried to pass him.

"I always knew you would come to us, that is to say, after the night I heard you at the hospital—the night of the nurses' ball, you remember, and the Father's visit, you know. Still, I trust there was nothing wrong—nothing at the hospital, I mean——"

"John was fumbling for the door to the dormer.

"Everybody loved you, too—the patients and the nurses and everybody! How they will miss you there! I trust you left everybody well—and happy and . . . eh?"

"Good-night," said John from the head of the stair.

There was silence for a moment, and then the brother said in another voice—

"Yes, I understand you. I know quite well what you mean. It is a fault to speak of the outer world except on especial need. We have taken the vows, too, and are pledged for life—I am, at all events. Still, if you could have told me anything. . . . But I am much to blame. I must confess my fault and do my penance."

John was diving down the stair and hurrying into his room.

"God help him!" he thought. "And me too! God help both of us! How am I to live if I have to hide this secret? Yet how is he to live if he learns it?"

He sat on the bed and tried to compose himself. Yes, Brother Paul was an object for pity. In all the moral universe there was no spectacle more pitiable than that of a man who had left the world while his heart was

still in it. What was he doing here? What had brought him? What business had such an one in such a place? And then his pitiful helplessness for all the uses of life and duty! Could it be right, could it be necessary, could it be God's wish and will?

Here was a man whose sister was in the world. She was young and vain, and the world was gay and seductive. Without a hand to guide and guard her, what evils might not befall? She was sunk already in shame and degradation, and he had put it out of his power to save her. Whatever had happened in the past, whatever might happen in the future, he was lost to her for ever. The captured eagle with the broken wing was now chained to the wall as well. But prayer! Prayer was the bulwark of chastity, and God was in need of no man's efforts.

John fell on his knees before the crucifix. With the broken logic of reverie he was thinking of Glory, and Brother Paul, and Polly and Drake. They crossed his brain and weighed upon it, and went out and returned. The night was cold, but the sweat stood on his brow in beads. In the depths of his soul something was speaking to him, and he was trying not to listen. He was like a blind man who had stumbled to the edge of a precipice, and could hear the waves breaking on the rocks beneath.

When he said his last prayer that night he omitted the petition for Glory (as duty seemed to require of him), and then found that all life and soul and strength had gone out of it. In the middle of the night he awoke with a sense of fright. Was it only a dream that he was dead and buried? He raised his head in the darkness and stretched out his hand. No, it was true. Little by

little he pieced together the incidents of the previous day. Yes, it had really happened.

"After all, I am not like Paul—I am not bound for life." he told himself, and then he lay back like a child and was comforted.

He was ashamed, but he could not help it. He was feeling already as if he were a prisoner in a dungeon looking forward to his release.

III.

5A Little Turnstile,
High Holborn, London, W.C.,
November 9th, 18—.

Oh yiz, oh yiz, oh yiz! This is to announce to you, with due pomp and circumstance, that I, Glory Quayle, am no longer at the hospital—for the present. Did I never tell you? Have you never noticed it in the regulations? Every half-year a nurse is entitled to a week's holiday, and as I have been exactly six months to-day at Martha's Vineyard, and as a week is too short a time for a trip to the "oilan"* and as a good lady whose acquaintance I have made here had given me a pressing invitation to visit her . . . See?

Being the first day since I came up to London that I have been sole mistress of my will and pleasure. I have been letting myself loose like "Cæsar" does the moment his mad little hoofies touch the grass. I must tell you all about it. The day began beautifully. After a spell of laughing and crying weather, and all the world sneezing and blowing its nose, there came a frosty morning with the sun shining and the air as bright as diamonds. I left the hospital between eleven and twelve o'clock, and

* Island.

crossing the Park by Birdcage Walk, I noticed that flags were flying on Buckingham Palace and church-bells ringing everywhere. It turned out to be the birthday of the Prince of Wales and the Lord Mayor's Day as well, and by the time I got to Storey's Gate, bands of music were playing and people were scampering towards the Houses of Parliament. So I ran too, and from the gardens in front of Palace Yard I saw the Lord Mayor's Show.

Do you know what that is, good people? It is a civic pageant. Once a year the City King makes a royal procession through the streets, with his soldiers and servants and keepers and pipers and retainers, bewigged and bepowdered and bestockinged pretty much as they used to be in the days before the Flood. There have been seven hundred of him in succession, and his particular vanity is to show that he is wearing the same clothes still. But it was beautiful altogether, and I could have cried with delight to see those grave-looking signiors forgetting themselves for once and pretending they were big boys over again.

Such a sight! Flags were flying everywhere and festoons were stretched across the streets with mottoes and texts such as "Unity is strength" and "God save the Queen," and other amiable if not original ideas. Traffic was stopped in the main thoroughfares, and the 'buses were sent by devious courses, much to the astonishment of the narrow streets. Then the crowds, the dense layers of potted people with white upturned faces, for all the world like the pictures of the round stones standing upright at the Giant's Causeway—it was wonderful!

And then the fun! Until the procession arrived the policemen were really obliging in that way. The one nearest me was as fat as Falstaff, and a slim young

Cockney in front kept addressing intimate remarks to him and calling him Robert. The young impudence himself was just as ridiculous, for he wore a fringe which was supported by hair-oil and soap, and rolled carefully down the right side of his forehead so that he could always keep his left eye on it. And he did too.

But the pageant itself! My gracious! how we laughed at it! There were Epping Forest verderers, and beef-eaters from the Tower, and pipers of the Scots Guards, and ladies of the ballet shivering on shaky stools and pretending to be "Freedom" and "Commerce," and last of all the City King himself, smiling and bowing to his subjects, and with his liegemen behind him in yellow coats and red silk stockings. Perhaps the most popular character was a Highlander in pink tights, where his legs ought to have been, walking along as solemnly as if he thought it was a sort of religious ceremony and he was an idol out for an airing.

And then the bands! There must have been twenty of them, both brass and fife, and they all played the "Washington Post," but no two had the luck to fall on the same bar at the same moment. It was a medley of all the tunes in music, an absolute kaleidoscope of sounds, and meantime there was the clash of bells from the neighbouring belfries in honour of the Prince's birthday and the rattle of musketry from the Guards, so that when the double event was over I felt like the man whose wife presented him with twins—I wouldn't have lost either of them for a million of money, but I couldn't have found it in my heart to give a bawbee for another one.

The procession took half-an-hour to pass, and when it was gone, remembering the ladies in lovely dresses who had rolled by in their gorgeous carriages, looking not a

bit cleverer or handsomer than other people, I turned away with a little hard lump at my heart and a limp in my left foot—the young Cockney with the fringe had backed on to my toe. I suppose they are feasting with the lords and all the nobility at the Guildhall to-night, and no doubt the crumbs that fall from the rich man's table will go in pies and cakes to the alleys and courts where hunger walks, and I dare say little Lazarus in the Mile-End Road is dreaming at this very moment of Dick Whittington and the Lord Mayor of London.

It must have been some waking dream of that sort which took possession of me also, for what do you suppose I did? Shall I tell you? Yes, I will. I said to myself, "Glory, my child, suppose you were nearly as poor as he was in this great, glorious, splendid London; suppose—only suppose—you had no home and no friends, and had left the hospital, or perhaps even been turned away from it, and hadn't a good lady's door standing open to receive you, what would you do first, my dear?" To all of which I replied promptly, "You would first get yourself lodgings, my child, and then you would just go to work to show this great, glorious London what a woman can do to bring it to her little feet."

I know grandfather is saying, "Gough bless me, girl! you didn't try it though?" Well, yes, I did—just for fun, you know, and out of the spirit of mischief that's born in every daughter of Eve. Do you remember that Manx cat that wouldn't live in the house, notwithstanding all the bribes and corruption of Aunt Rachel's new milk and softened bread, but went off by the back-yard wall to join the tribe of pariah pussies that snatch a living how they may? Well, I felt like Rumpy for once, having

three "goolden sovereigns" in my pocket and a mind superior to fate.

It was glorious fun altogether, and the world is so amusing that I can't imagine why anybody should go out of it before he must. I hadn't gone a dozen yards in my new character as Dick Whittington *fille* before a coachman as fat as an elephant was shouting, "Where d'ye think yer going ter?" and I was nearly run down in the Broad Sanctuary by a carriage containing two brazen women in sealskin jackets, with faces so thick with powder and paint that you would have thought they had been quarrelling on washing-day and thrown the blue bag at each other's eyes. I recognised one of them as a former nurse who had left the hospital in disgrace, but happily she didn't see me, for the little hard lump at my heart was turning as bitter as gall at that moment, so I made some philosophical observations to myself and passed on.

Oh, my gracious, these London landladies! They must be female Shylocks, for the pound of flesh is the badge of all their tribe. The first one I boarded asked two guineas for two rooms, and lights and fires extra. "By the month?" says I. "Yus, by the month, if ye like," says she. "Two guineas a month?" says I. Marry come up! I was out of that house in a twinkling.

Then I looked out a group of humbler thoroughfares, not far from the Houses of Parliament, where nearly every house had a card fixed up on a little green blind. At last I found a place that would do—for my week, only my week, you know. Ten shillings, and no extras. "I'll take them," said I, with a lofty air, and thereupon the landlady, a grim person, with the suspicion of a moustache, began to cross-examine me. Was I married? Oh, dear no. Then what was my business? Fool that

I was, I said I had none, being full of my Dick Whittingtonism, and not choosing to remember the hospital, for I was wearing my private clothes, you know. But hoot! She didn't take unmarried young ladies without business, and I was out in the street once more.

I didn't mind it, not I indeed, and it was only for fun after all; but since people objected to girls without businesses, I made up my mind to be a singer, if anybody asked me the question again. My third landlady had only one room, and it was on the second floor back; but before I got the length of mounting to this eyry, I went through my examination afresh. "In the profession, Miss?" "What profession?" "The styge, of course." "Well, ye—yes, something of that sort." "Don't take anybody that's on the styge."

Oh dear! oh dear! I could have screamed, it was ridiculous. But time was getting on, Big Ben was striking four, and the day was closing in. Then I saw a sign, "Home for Girls." "Wonder if it is a charity," thinks I; but no, it didn't look like that, so in I went as bold as brass and inquired for the manageress. "Is it the matron you mean, Miss?" "Very well, the matron then," said I, and presently she came up—no, not smiling, for she wasn't an amiable-looking Christian; but I thought she would smother me with mysterious questions. "Tired of the life, are you, my dear? It *is* a cruel one, isn't it?" I stood my ground for some minutes, and then, feeling dreadfully thick in the throat, and cold down the back, I asked her what she was talking about, whereupon she looked bewildered, and inquired if I was a good girl, and being told that I hoped so, she said she couldn't take me in there, and then pointed to a card on the wall, which, simpleton that I was, I hadn't read be-

fore: "A home and rescue is offered to women who desire to leave a life of misery and disgrace."

I *did* scream that time, the world was so nonsensical. At one place, being "on the styge," I was not good enough to be taken in, at another I was not bad enough, and what in the name of all that was ridiculous was going to happen next? But it was quite dark by this time, the air was as black as a north-west gale, and I was "aweary for all my wings;" so forgetting Dick Whittington *fille,* and only remembering the good female Samaritan who had asked me to stay with her, I made a dart for Victoria Street, and jumped into the first 'bus that came along, just as the hotels and the clubs and the great buildings were putting out the Prince of Wales's feathers as sign and symbol of the usual rejoicings within.

It was an "Atlas" omnibus, and it took me to Piccadilly Circus, and that being the wrong direction, I had to change. But a fog had come down in the meanwhile, and lo, there I was in the middle of it!

O Ananias, Azarias, and Misael! Do you know what a London fog is? It's smoke, it's soot, it's sulphur. It is darker than night, for it extinguishes the lights, and denser than the mist on the Curragh, and filthier than the fumes of the brick-kiln. It makes you think the whole round earth must be a piggery copper, and that London has lifted the lid off. In the midst of this inferno the cabs crawl and the 'buses creep, and foul fiends, who turn out to be men merely, go flitting about with torches, and you grope and croak and cough, and the most innocent faces come puffing and snorting down on you like the beasts in the Apocalypse.

I thought it good fun at first, but presently I could only keep from crying by having a good laugh, and I

was doing that, and asking somebody the way to the Holborn omnibus, when a policeman pushed me and said, "Come, move on, none of yer lyterin' abart here!"

I could have choked, but remembering something I had seen on that very spot on the night of my first day out, I dived across the street and ran, in spite of curses and collisions. But the "somebody," whoever he was, had followed me, and he put me into the right 'bus, so I got here at last. It took two mortal hours to do it, and after that spell of purgatory this house is like a blessed paradise, peopled with angels of mercy and grace, as paradise ought to be.

The good Samaritan was very kind, and she made tea for me in a twinkling and slaughtered the fatted calf in the shape of a pot of raspberry jam. Her name is Mrs. Jupe, and her husband is something in a club, and she has one child of eleven, whose bedfellow I am to be, and here I am now with Miss Slyboots in our little bedroom, feeling safe and sound and monarch of all I survey!

"Good-night, good people! Half-an-hour hence I'll be going through a mad march of the incidents of the day, turned topsy-turvy according to the way of dreams. But wae's me! wae's me! If it had all been true—if I had been really homeless and friendless and penniless, instead of having three "goolden" pounds in my purse, and Providence, in the person of Mrs. Jupe, to fall back upon! When I grow to be a wonderful woman and have brought the eyes of all the earth upon me, I am going to be good to poor girls who have no anchorage in London. John Storm was right; this great, glorious, brilliant, delightful London can be very cruel to them sometimes. It calls to them, beckons to them, smiles on them, makes them think there must be joy in the blaze

of so much light and luxury and love by the side of so many palaces, and then . . .

But perhaps the mischief lies deeper down; and though I'm not going to cut my hair and wear a waistcoat and stand up for the equal rights of the sexes, I feel at this moment that if I were only a man I should be the happiest woman in the world, God bless me! Not that I'm afraid of London—not I indeed; and to show you how I long to take a header into its turbulent tides, I hereby warn and apprise and notify you that perhaps I may use my week's holiday to find a more congenial employment than that of deputy White Owl at the hospital. I am not in my right place yet, Aunt Anna notwithstanding; so look out for revelations! To be or not to be? that is the question. Just say the word and I'll leave it to Providence, which is always a convenient legatee, and in any case . . . But wait, only wait and see what a week will bring forth!

Greet the island for me to the inmost core of its being. The dear little "oilan"! Now that I am so far away I go over it in my mind's eye with the idiotic affection of a mother who knows every inch of her baby's body and would like to gobble it. The leaves must be down by this time, and there can be nothing on the bare boughs but the empty nests where the little birdies used to woo and sing. My love to them, and three tremendous kisses for yourselves! GLORY.

P.S.—Oh, haven't I given you the "newses" about John Storm? There are so many things to think about in a place like London, you see. Yes, he has gone into a monastery—communication cut off—wires broken down by the "storm," &c. Soberly, he has gone for good

seemingly, and to talk of it lightly is like picking a penny out of a blind man's hat. Of course it was only to be expected that a man with an upper lip like that should come to grief with all those married old maids and elderly women of the opposite sex. Canons to right of him, canons to left of him, canons in front of him—but rumour says it was John himself who volleyed and thundered. He wrote me a letter when he was on the point of going, saying how London had shocked and disappointed him, and how he longed to escape from it and from himself at the same time, that he might dedicate his life to God. It was right and true, no doubt; but wherefore could not I pronounce Amen? He also mentioned something about myself, how much I had been to him; for he had never known his mother, and had never had a sister, and could never have a wife. All which was excellent; but a mere woman like Glory doesn't want to read that sort of thing in a letter, and would rather have five minutes of John Storm the man than a whole eternity of John Storm the saint. His letter made me think of Christian on his way to the eternal city, but that person has always seemed to me a doubtful sort of hero anyway, taking Mrs. Christian into account and the various little Christians, and I can't pity him a pin about his bundle, for he might just as well have left behind him what he couldn't enjoy of God's providence himself.

But this is like hitting a cripple with his crutch, John being gone and past all defending himself; and when I think of it in the streets, I have to run to keep myself from doing something silly, and then people think I'm chasing an omnibus when I'm really only chasing my tears. I can't tell you much about the Brotherhood. It looks like a cross between a palace and a penitentiary,

and it appears that Ritualism has gone one better than High Churchmanship and is trying to introduce the monastic system, which, to an ordinary woman of the world, seems well enough for the man in the moon, though the man in the moon might have a different way of looking at things. They say the brothers are all celibates and live in cells, but I think I've seen a look in John Storm's eyes that warns me that he wasn't intended for "the lek o' that" exactly. To tell you the truth, I half blame myself for what has happened, and I am ashamed when I remember how jauntily I took matters all the time our poor John was fighting with beasts at Ephesus. But I am vexed with him, too; and if only he had waited patiently before taking such a serious step in order to hear *my* arguments . . . But no matter. A jackdaw isn't to be called a religious bird because it keeps a-cawing on the steeple, and John Storm won't make himself into a monk by shutting himself up in a cell. Good-night.

IV.

THE house to which Glory had fled out of the fog was a little dingy tobacconist's shop opening on a narrow alley that runs from Holborn into Lincoln's Inn Fields. It was kept by the baby-farmer whom she had met at the house of Polly Love, and the memory of the address thrust upon her there had been her only resource on that day of crushing disappointment and that night of peril. Mrs. Jupe's husband, a waiter at a West End club, was a simple and helpless creature, very fond of his wife, much deceived by her and kept in ignorance of the darker side of her business operations. Their daughter, familiarly called "Booboo," a silent child with cunning eyes and

pasty cheeks, was being brought up to help in the shop and to dodge the inspector of the School Board.

On coming downstairs next morning to the close and dingy parlour at the back, Glory had looked about her as one who had expected something she did not see, whereupon Mrs. Jupe, who was at breakfast with her husband, threw up her little twinkling eyes and said—

"Now I know what she's a-looking for—it's the byeby."

"Where is it?" said Glory.

"Gorn, my dear."

"Surely you don't mean——"

"No, not dead, but I 'ad to put it out, pore thing."

"Ye see, Miss," said Mr. Jupe with his mouth full, "my missus couldn't nurse the byeby and 'tend to the biziniss as well; so, as reason was——"

"It brikes my 'eart to think of it; but it made such a n'ise, pore darling——"

"Does the mother know?" said Glory.

"That wasn't necessary, my dear. It's gorn to a pusson I can trust to tyke kear of it, and I'm trooly thenkful——"

"It jest amarnts to this, Miss—the biziniss is too much for the missus as things is——"

"I wouldn't keer if my 'ealth was what it used to be in the dyes when I 'ad Booboo."

"But it ain't, and she's often said as how she'd like a young laidy to live with her and 'elp her with the shop."

"A nice-lookin' girl might 'ave a many chawnces in a place syme as this, my dear."

"Lawd, yus; and when I seen the young laidy come in at the door, 'strike me lucky!' thinks I, 'the very one.'"

"Syme 'ere, my dear. I reckkernized ye the minute

I seen ye; and if ye want to leave the hospital and myke a stawt, as you were saying last night——"

Glory stopped them. They were on the wrong track entirely. She had merely come to lodge with them, and if that was not agreeable——

"Well, and so ye shell, my dear; and if ye don't like the shop all at onct, there's Booboo,—she wants lessons——"

"But I can pay," said Glory, and then she was compelled to say something of her plans. She wanted to become a singer, perhaps an actress, and, to tell them the truth, she might not be staying long, for when she got engagements——

"Jest as you like, my dear; myke yerself at 'ome. On'y don't be in a nurry about engygements. Good ones ain't tots picked up by the childring in the streets these dyes."

Nevertheless it was agreed that Glory was to lodge at the tobacconist's, and Mr. Jupe was to bring her box from the hospital on coming home that night from his work. She was to pay ten shillings a week, all told, so that her money would last four or five weeks, and leave something to spare. "But I shall be earning long before that," she thought, and her resources seemed boundless. She started on her enterprise instantly, knowing no more of how to begin than that it would first be necessary to find the office of an agent. Mr. Jupe remembered one such place.

"It's in a street off of Waterloo Road," he said, "and the name on the windows is Josephs."

Glory found this person in a fur-lined coat and an opera-hat sitting in a room which was papered with photographs, chiefly of the nude and the semi-nude, inter-

mingled with sheafs of playbills that hung from the walls like ballads from the board of the ballad-monger.

"Vell, vot's your line?" he asked.

Glory answered nervously and indefinitely.

"Vot can you do, then?"

She could sing and recite and imitate people.

The man shrugged his shoulders. "My terms are two guineas down and ten per cent. on salary."

Glory rose to go. "That is impossible. I cannot——"

"Vait a minute. How much have you got?"

"Isn't that my business, sir?"

"Touchy, ain't ye, Miss? But if you mean bizness, I'll tyke a guinea and give you the first chawnce what comes in."

Reluctantly, fearfully, distrustfully, Glory paid her guinea and left her address.

"Daddle doo," said the agent.

Then she found herself in the street. "Two weeks less for lodgings," she thought, as she returned to the tobacconist's. But Mrs. Jupe seemed entirely satisfied.

"What did I tell ye, my dear? Good engygements ain't chasing nobody abart the streets these dyes, and there's that many girls now as can do a song and a dance and a recitashing."

Three days passed, four days, five days, six days, a week, and still no word from Mr. Josephs. Glory called on him again. He counselled patience. It was the dead season at the theatres and music-halls, but if she only waited——

She waited a week longer, and then called again, and again, and yet again. But she brought nothing back except her mimicry of the man's manner. She could hit him off to a hair—his raucous voice, his guttural utterance,

and the shrug of his shoulders that told of the Ghetto.

Mrs. Jupe shrieked with laughter. That lady's spirits were going up as Glory's came down. At the end of the third week she said, "I can't abear to tyke yer money no longer, my dear, you not doing nothink."

Then she hinted at a new arrangement. She had to be much from home. It was necessary; her health was poor—an obvious fiction. During her absence she had to leave Booboo in charge.

"It ain't good for the child, my dear, and it ain't good for the shop; but if anybody syme as yerself would tyke a turn behind the counter——"

Having less than ten shillings in her pocket, Glory was forced to submit.

There was a considerable traffic through the little turnstile. Lying between Bedford Row and Lincoln's Inn, it was the usual course of lawyers and lawyers' clerks passing to and from the courts. They were not long in seeing that a fresh and beautiful face was behind the counter of the dingy little tobacco shop. Business increased, and Mrs. Jupe became radiant.

"What did I tell ye, my dear? There's more real gentlemen a mooching rahnd here in a day than a girl would have a chawnce of meeting in a awspital in a twelvemonth."

Glory's very soul was sickening. The attentions of the men, their easy manners, their little liberties, their bows, their smiles, their compliments—it was gall and wormwood to the girl's unbroken spirit. Nevertheless she was conscious of a certain pleasure in the bitterness. The bitterness was her own; the pleasure someone else's, so to speak, who was looking on and laughing. She felt an

unconquerable impulse to sharpen her wit on Mrs. Jupe's customers, and even to imitate them to their faces. They liked it, so she was good for business both ways.

But she remembered John Storm and felt suffocated with shame. Her thoughts turned to him constantly, and she called at the hospital to ask if there were any letters. There were two, but neither of them was from Bishopsgate Street. One was from Aunt Anna. Glory was not to dream of leaving the hospital. With tithes going down every year and everything else going up, how could she think of throwing away a salary and adding to their anxieties? The other was from her grandfather:—

"Glad to hear you have had a holiday, dear Glory, and trust you are feeling the better for the change. Must confess to being a little startled by the account of your adventure on Lord Mayor's Day, with the wild scheme for cutting adrift from the hospital and taking London by storm. But it was just like my little witch, my wandering gipsy, and I knew it was all nonsense; so when Aunt Anna began to scold, I took my pipe and went upstairs. Sorry to hear that John Storm has gone over to Popery, for that is what it comes to, though he is not under the Romish obedience. I am the more concerned because I failed to make his peace with his father. The old man seems to blame me for everything, and has even taken to passing me on the road. Give my best respects to Mrs. Jupe when you see her again, with my thanks for taking care of you. And now that you are alone in that great and wicked Babylon, take good care of yourself, my dear one. To know that my runaway is well and happy and prosperous is all I have left to reconcile me to her absence. Yes, the harvest is over and threshed and housed,

and we have fires in the parlour nearly every day, which makes Anna severe sometimes, coals being so dear just now and the turf no longer allowed to us."

It was ten days overdue. That night, in her little bedroom, with its low ceiling and sloping floor, Glory wrote her answer:—

"But it isn't nonsense, my dear grandfather, and I really have left the hospital. I don't know if it was the holiday and the liberty or what, but I felt like that young hawk at Glenfaba—do you remember it?—the one that was partly snared, and came dragging the trap on to the lawn by a string caught round its leg. I had to cut it away—I had to, I had to! But you mustn't feel one single moment's uneasiness about me. An able-bodied woman like Glory Quayle doesn't starve in a place like London. Besides, I am provided for already, so you see my bow abides in strength. The first morning after my arrival Mrs. Jupe told me that if I cared to take to myself the style and title of teacheress to her little Slyboots, I had only to say the word, and I should be as welcome as the flowers in May. It isn't exactly first fiddling, you know, and it doesn't bring an ambassador's salary, but it may serve for the present, and give me time to look about. You mustn't pay too much attention to my lamentations about being compelled by nature to wear a petticoat. Things being so arranged in this world, I'll make them do. But it does make one's head swim and one's wings droop to see how hard Nature is on a woman compared to a man. Unless she is a genius or a jellyfish, there seems to be only one career open to her, and that is a lottery, with marriage for the prizes, and for the blanks—

oh dear, oh dear! Not that I have anything to complain of, and I hate to be so sensitive. Life is wonderfully interesting, and the world is such an amusing place that I have no patience with people who run away from it, and if I were a man . . . . But wait, only wait, good people!"

V.

John Storm had made one other friend at Bishopsgate Street—the dog of the monastery. It was a half-bred bloodhound, and nobody seemed to know whence he came and why he was there. He was a huge, ungainly, and most forbidding creature, and partly for that reason, but chiefly because it was against rule to fix the affections on earthly things, the brothers rarely caressed him. Unnoticed and unheeded, he slept in the house by day and prowled through the court by night, and had hardly ever been known to go out into the streets. He was the strictest monk in the monastery, for he eyed every stranger as if he had been Satan himself, and howled at all music except the singing in the church.

On seeing John for the first time, he broadened his big flews and stiffened his thick stern, according to his wont with all intruders, but in this instance the intruder was not afraid. John patted him on the peaked head and rubbed him on the broad nose, then opened his mouth and examined his teeth, and finally turned him on his back and tickled his chest, and they were fast friends and comrades for ever after.

Some weeks after the dedication they were in the courtyard together, and the dog was pitching and plunging and uttering deep bays, which echoed between the walls like thunder at play. It was the hour of morning recreation, between Terce and Sext, and the religious

were lolling about and talking, and one lay brother was sweeping up the leaves that had fallen from the tree, for the winter had come and the branches were bare. The lay brother was Brother Paul, and he made sidelong looks at John, but kept his head down, and went on with his work without speaking. One by one the brothers went back to the house, and John made ready to follow them, but Paul put himself in his way. He was thinner than before, and his eyes were red and his respiration difficult. Nevertheless, he smiled in a childlike way and began to talk of the dog. What life there was in the old creature still! and nobody had known there was so much play in it.

"You are not feeling so well, are you?" said John.

"Not quite so well," he answered.

"The day is cold, and this penance is too much for you."

"No, it's not that. I asked for it, you know, and I like it. It's something else. To tell you the truth, I'm very foolish in some ways. When I've got anything on my mind, I'm always thinking. Day and night it's the same with me, and even work——"

His breathing was audible, but he tried to laugh.

"Do you know what it is this time? It's what you said on the tower on the night of the vows, you remember. What you didn't say, I mean, and that's just the trouble. It was wrong to talk of the world without great necessity; but if you had been able to answer me in a word, if you had been able to say 'Yes' when I asked if everybody was well, you would have done it, wouldn't you?"

"We'll not talk of that now," said John.

"No, it would be the same fault as before. Still——"

"How keen the air is! And your asthma is so troublesome! You must really let me speak to the Father."

"Oh, that's nothing; I'm used to it. But if you know yourself what it is to be always thinking of anybody——"

John called to the dog, and it capered about him. "Good morning, Brother Paul." And he went into the house. The lay brother leaned on his besom and drew a long sigh, that seemed to come from the depth of his chest.

John had hastened away lest his voice should betray him.

"Awful!" he thought. "It must be awful to be always thinking of somebody, and in fear of what has happened to her. Poor little Polly! She's not worthy of it; but what does that matter? Blood is blood and love is love, and only God is stronger."

A few days afterwards the air darkened and softened, and snow began to fall. Between Vespers and Evensong John went up to the tower to see London under its mantle of white. It was like an Eastern city now under an Eastern moonlight, and he was listening to the shouts and laughter of people snowballing in the streets, when he heard a laboured step on the stair behind him. It was Brother Paul coming up with a spade to shovel away the snow. His features were pinched and contracted, and his young face was looking old and worn.

"You really must not do it," said John. "To work like this is not penance but suicide. I'll speak to the Father, and he'll——"

"Don't, for mercy's sake, don't. Have some pity, at all events. If you only knew what a good thing work is for me—how it drives away thoughts and stifles——"

"But it's so useless, Brother Paul. Look! the snow is still falling, and there's more to come yet."

"All the same, it's good for me. When I'm very tired, I can sleep sometimes; and then God is good to

you if you don't spare yourself. Some day perhaps He'll tell me something."

"He'll tell us everything in His own good time, Brother Paul."

"It's easy to counsel patience. If I were like you are, I should be counting the days until my time was over, and that would help me to bear things. But when you are dedicated for life——"

He stopped at his work and looked over the parapet, and seemed to be gazing into the weary days to come.

"Have you anybody of your own out there?"

"You mean any——"

"Any relative—any sister?"

"No."

"Then you don't know what it is; that's why you won't give me an answer."

"Don't ask me, Brother Paul."

"Why not?"

"It might only make you the more uneasy if I told you what——"

The lay brother let his spade fall, then slowly, very slowly, picked it up again and said—

"I understand. You needn't say any more. I shall never ask you again."

The bell rang for Evensong and John hurried away. "If it were only someone who was deserving of it!" he thought. "Someone who was worthy that a man should risk his soul to save her!"

At supper and in church he saw Brother Paul going about like a man in a waking dream, and when he went up to bed he heard him moving restlessly in the adjoining cell. The fear of betraying himself was becoming unbearable, and he leaped up and stepped out into the

corridor intending to ask the Superior to give him another room elsewhere. But he stopped and came back. "It's not brave," he thought, "it's not kind, it's not human," and saying this again and again, as one whistles when going by a haunted house, he covered his ears and fell asleep.

In the middle of the night, while it was still quite dark, he was awakened by a light on his face and the sense of someone looking down on him in his sleep. With a shudder he opened his eyes and saw Brother Paul, candle in hand, standing by the bed. His eyes were red and swollen, and when he spoke his voice was full of tears.

"I know it's a fault to come into anybody else's cell," he said; "but I would rather do my penance than endure this torture. Something has happened—I can see that quite well; but I don't know what it is, and the suspense is killing me. The certainty would be easier to bear; and I swear to you by Him who died for us that if you tell me I shall be satisfied. Is she dead?"

"Not that," said John by a sudden impulse, and then there was an awful silence.

"Not dead!" said Paul. "Then would to God that she were dead, for it must be something worse, a thousand times worse!"

John felt as if the secret had been stolen from him in his sleep; but it was gone, and he could say nothing. Brother Paul's lips trembled, his respiration quickened, and he turned away and smote his head against the wall and sobbed.

"I knew it all the time," he said. "Her sister went the same way, and I could see that she was going too, and that was why I was so anxious. Oh, my poor mother! my poor mother!"

For two days after that John saw no more of Brother Paul. "He is doing his penance somewhere," he thought.

Meanwhile the snow was still falling, and when the brothers went out to Lauds at 6 A.M., they passed through a cutting of snow which was banked up afresh every morning, though the day had not then dawned. On the third day John was the first to go down to the hall, and there he met Brother Paul, with his spade in his hands, coming out of the courtyard. He looked like a man who was melting before a fire as surely as a piece of wax.

"I am sorry now that I told you," said John.

Brother Paul hung his head.

"It is easy to see that you are suffering more than ever, and it is all my fault. I will go to the Father and confess."

Between breakfast and Terce John carried out his intention. The Superior was sitting before a handful of fire in a little room that was darkened by leather-bound books and by the flakes of snow which were falling across the window-panes.

"Father," said John, "I am a cause of offence to another brother, and it is I who should be doing his penance." And then he told how he had broken the observance which forbids anyone to talk of his relations with the world without.

The Father listened with great solemnity. "My son," he said, "your temptation is a testimony to the reality of the religious life. Satan's rage against the home of consecrated souls is terrible, and he would fain break in upon it if he could with worldly thoughts and cares and passions. But we must conquer him by his own weapons. Your penance, my son, shall be of the same kind with your offence. Go to the door and take the place of the

doorkeeper, and stay there day and night until the end of the year. Thus shall the evil one be made aware that you are the guardian of our house, to be tampered with no more.

Brother Andrew was troubled when John took his place at the door that night, but John himself was unconcerned. He was doorkeeper to the household, so he began on the duties of his menial position. As the brothers passed in and out on their mission errands, he opened the door and closed it. If anyone knocked, he answered "Praise be to God," then slid back the little grating in the middle panel of the door and looked out at the stranger. The hall was a chill place with a stone floor, and he sat on a form that stood against one of its walls. His bed was in an alcove which had formerly been the cloak-room, and a card hung over it with the inscription, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord." He had no company except big Brother Andrew, who stole down sometimes to cheer him with his speechless presence, and the dog, which was always hanging about him.

VI.

It was at least some comfort to be out of the proximity of Brother Paul. The sounds of the lay brother in the neighbouring cell had brought back recollections of Glory, and he had more than he could do to conquer his thoughts of her. Since he had taken his vows, and had ceased to mention her in his prayers, she had been always with him, and his fears for her fate had been pricked and goaded by the constant presence of Brother Paul's anxieties.

On the other hand, it was some loss that he could

not go to the church; and he remembered with a pang how happy he had been after a night of terrors when he had gone into God's house in the morning and cast his burden on Him with one yearning cry of "God bless all women and young children!"

It was now the Christmas season, and his heart tingled and thrilled as the brothers passed through the door at midday, and talked of the women who attended the Christmas services. Were they really so calm as they seemed to be, and had they conquered their natural affections?

Sometimes during the midday service he would slide back the grating and listen for the women's voices. He heard one voice in all of them, but he knew it was only a dream. Then he would watch the snow falling from the little patch of dun-coloured sky crossed by bars, and tell himself that that was all he was to see of the world henceforth.

The sky emptied itself at last, and Brother Paul came again to shovel away the snow. He was weaker than ever, for the wax was melting away. When he began to work, his chest was oppressed and his face was feverish. John snatched the spade out of his hand, and fell to doing his work instead of him.

"I can't bear to see it, and I won't," he said.

"But the Father——"

"I don't care; you can tell him if you like. You are killing yourself by inches, and you are a failing man anyway."

"Am I really dying?" said Brother Paul, and he staggered away like one who had heard his sentence.

John looked after him, and thought—"Now, what

should I do if I were in that man's place? If the case were Glory's, and I fixed here as in a vice?"

He was ashamed when he thought of Glory like that, and he dismissed the idea; but it came back with mechanical obstinacy, and he was compelled to consider it. His vows? Yes, it would be death to his soul to break them. But if she were lost, who had no one but him to look to—if she went down to wreck and ruin—then the fires of hell would be as nothing to his despair.

Brother Paul came to him next day, and sat on the form by his side, and said—

"If I'm really dying, what am I to do?"

"What would you like to do, Brother Paul?"

"I should like to go out and find her."

"What good would there be in that?"

"I could say something that would stop her and put an end to everything."

"Are you sure of it?"

A wild light came into his eyes, and he answered, "Quite sure."

John played the hypocrite, and began to counsel patience.

"But a man can't live without hope and not go mad," said Brother Paul.

"We must trust and pray," said John.

"But God never answers us. If it were your own case, what would you do? If someone outside were lost——"

"I should go to the Father and say, 'Let me go in search of her.'"

"I'll do it," said Brother Paul.

"Why not? The Father is kind and tender, and he loves his children."

"Yes, I *will* do it," said Paul, and he made for the Father's room.

He got to the door of the cell, and then came back again. "I can't," he said. "There's something you don't know. I can't look in his face and ask."

"Stay here, and I'll ask for you," said John.

"God bless you!" said Paul.

John made three hasty strides, and then stopped.

"But if he will not——"

"Then God's will be done!"

It was morning, and the Superior was reading in his room.

"Come in, my son," he said, and he laid his book on his lap. "This is a book you must read some day, the 'Inner Life of Père Lacordaire.' Most fascinating! An inner life of intolerable horror until he had conquered his natural affections."

"Father," said John, "one of our lay brothers has a little sister in the world and she has fallen into trouble. She has gone from the place where he left her, and God only knows where she is now. Let him go out and find her."

"Who is it, my son?"

"Brother Paul—and she is all he has, and he cannot help but think of her."

"This is a temptation of the Evil One, my son. Brother Paul has newly taken the vows, and so have you. The vows are a challenge to the powers of evil, and it is only to be expected that he who takes them will be tested to the uttermost."

"But, Father, she is young and thoughtless. Let him go out and find her and save her, and he will come back and praise God a thousand times the more."

"The temptations of Satan are very subtle; they come in the guise of duty. Satan is tempting our brother through love, and you also through pity. Let us turn our backs on him."

"Then it is impossible?"

"Quite impossible."

When John returned to the door, Brother Paul was standing by the alcove gazing with wet eyes on the text hanging above the bed. He saw his answer in John's face, and they sat down on the form without speaking.

The bell rang for service, and the religious began to pass through the hall. As the Father was crossing the threshold, Brother Paul flung himself down at his feet and clutched his cassock and made a frantic appeal for pity.

"Father, have pity upon me and let me go!"

The Father's eyes became moist, but his will remained unshaken. "As a man I ought to have pity," he said, "and as the father of all of you I should be kind to my children; but it is not I who refuse you—it is God, and I should be guilty of a sin if I let you go."

Then Paul burst into mad laughter, and the religious gathered round and looked at him in astonishment. There was foam on his lips and fire in his eyes, and he threw up his hands and fell back fainting.

The Father made the sign of the cross on his breast and his lips moved in silence for a moment. Then he said to John, who had raised the lay brother in his arms—

"Leave him there. Damp his forehead and hold his hands."

And turning to the religious he added, "I ask the prayers of the community for our poor brother. Satan is fighting for his soul. Let us wrestle in prayer that we may expel the spirit that possesses him."

At the next moment John was alone with the unconscious man, except for the dog which was licking his forehead. And looking after the Superior, he told himself that such unlimited power over the body and soul of another the Almighty could have meant for no man. The love of God and the fear of the devil had swallowed up the love of man and stifled all human affections. Such religion must have hardened the best man ever born. As for the poor broken creature lying there so still, his vows had been made to Heaven, and to Heaven alone his obedience was due. The nature within him had spoken too loudly, but there were laws of nature which it was a sin to resist. Then why should he resist them? The cry of blood was the voice of God, or God had no voice and He could speak to no man. Then why should he not listen?

Brother Paul recovered consciousness and raised his head. The waves of memory flowed back upon him and his eyes flamed and his lip trembled.

"I will go if I have to break my vows," he said.

"No need for that," said John.

"Why so?"

"Because I will let you out at night and let you in again in the morning."

"You?"

"Yes, I. Listen!"

And then these two crushed and fettered souls, bound by no iron bonds, confined by no bolts and bars, but only under the shadow of the supernatural, sat together like prisoners in a dungeon concocting schemes for their escape.

"The Father locks the outer gate himself," said John. "Where does he keep the key?"

"In his own room on a nail above his bed," said Paul.

"Who is the lay brother attending to him now?"

"Brother Andrew."

"Brother Andrew will do anything for me," said John.

"But the dog?" said Paul. "He is always in the court at night, and he barks at the sound of a step."

"Not my step," said John.

"I'll do it," said Paul.

"I will send you to someone who can find your sister. You'll tell her you come from me and she'll take you with her."

They could hear the singing in the church, and they paused to listen.

"When I come back in the morning I'll confess everything and do my penance," said Paul.

"And I too," said John.

The sun had come out with a sudden gleam, and the thawing snow was dripping from the trees in drops like diamonds. The singing ceased, the service ended, and the brothers came back to the house. When the Father entered, Paul was clothed and in his right mind, and sitting quietly on the form.

"Thank God for this answer to our prayers!" said the Father. "But you must pray without ceasing lest Satan should conquer you again. Until the end of the year say your Rosary in the church every night alone from Compline to midnight."

Then turning to John he said with a smile, "And you shall be like the anchoret of old to this household, my son. We monks pray by day, but the anchoret prays by night. Unless we know that in the dark hours the anchoret guards the house, who shall rest on his bed in peace?"

VII.

At the end of the fourth week after Glory had paid her fee to the agent, she called on him again. It was Saturday morning, and the vicinity of his office was a strange and surprising scene. The staircase and passages to the house as well as the pavement of the streets, as far as to the public-house at the corner, were thronged with a gaudy but shabby army of music-hall artistes of both sexes. When Glory attempted to pass through them she was stopped by a cry of "Tyke yer turn on treasury day, my dear," and she fell back and waited.

One by one they passed upstairs, came down again with cheerful faces, shouted their adieux and disappeared. Meanwhile they amused themselves with salutations, all more or less lively and familiar, told stories and exchanged confidences, while they danced a step or stamped about to keep away the cold. "You've chucked the slap * on with a mop this morning, my dear," said one of the girls. "Have I, my love? Well, I was a bit thick about the clear, so I thought it would keep me warm." "It ain't no use facing the doner of the casa with that," said a man who jingled a few coins as he came downstairs, and away went two to the public-house. Sometimes a showy brougham would drive up to the door, and a magnificent person in a fur-lined coat with diamond rings on both hands would sweep through the lines and go upstairs. When he came down again his carriage door would be opened by half a dozen "pros" who would call him "dear old cully," and tell him they were "down on their luck" and hadn't "done a turn for a fortnight." He would distribute shillings and half-crowns among them, cry "Ta-

* Rouge.

ta, boys," and drive away, whereupon his pensioners would stroke their cuffs and collars of threadbare astrakhan, tip winks after the carriage and say, "That's better than crying cabbages in Covent Garden, ain't it?" Then they would all laugh knowingly, and one would say, "What's it to be, cully?" and somebody would answer, "Come along to Poverty Point then," and a batch of the waiting troop would trip off to the corner.

One of the gorgeous kind was coming down the stairs when his eye fell on Glory as she stood in a group of girls who were decked out in rose pink and corresponding finery. He paused, turned back, re-opened the office-door, and said in an audible whisper, "Who's the pretty young ginger you've got here, Josephs?" A moment afterwards the agent had come out and called her upstairs.

"It's salary day, my dear, vait there," he said, he put her into an inner room, which was tawdrily furnished in faded red plush, with a piano and coloured prints of ballet-girls and boxing men, and was full of the odour of stale tobacco and bad whisky.

She waited half-an-hour, feeling hot and ashamed and troubled with perplexing thoughts, and listening to the jingle of money in the adjoining room, mingled with the ripple of laughter and sometimes the exchange of angry words. At length the agent came back, saying, "Vell, what can I do for you to-day, my dear?"

He had been drinking; his tone was familiar, and he placed himself at the end of the sofa upon which Glory was seated.

Glory rose immediately. "I came to ask if you have heard of anything for me," she said.

"Sit down, my dear."

"No, thank you."

"Heard anything? Not yet, my dear. You must vait——"

"I think I've waited long enough, and if your promises amount to anything you'll get me an appearance, at all events."

"So I would, my dear; I would get you an extra turn at the Vashington, but it is very expensive, and you've got no money."

"Then why did you take what I had if you can do nothing? Besides, I don't want anything but what my talents will earn. Give me a letter to a manager—for mercy's sake do something for me!"

There was the shrug of the Ghetto as the man rose and said, "Very vell; if it's like that, I'll give you a letter and welcome."

He sat at the table and wrote a short note, sealed it carefully in an envelope which was backed with advertisements, then gave it to Glory and said, "Daddle doo. You'll not require to come again."

Going downstairs she looked at the letter. It was addressed to an acting-manager at a theatre in the farthest west of London. The passages of the house and the pavements outside were now empty; it was nearly two o'clock and snow was beginning to fall. She was feeling cold and a little hungry, but making up her mind to deliver the letter at once, she hastened to the Temple Station.

There was a *matinée,* so the acting-manager was "in front." He took the letter abruptly, opened it with an air of irritation, glanced at it, glanced at Glory, looked at the letter again, and then said in a strangely gentle voice, "Do you know what's in this, my girl?"

"No," said Glory.

"Of course you don't—look," and he gave her the letter to read. It ran:—

"DEAR ——,—This wretched young ginger is worrying me for a shop. She isn't worth a ——. Get rid of her, and oblige, JOSEPHS."

Glory flushed up to the forehead and bit her lip, then a little nervous laugh broke from her throat, and two great tears came rolling from her eyes. The acting-manager took the letter out of her hands and tapped her kindly on the shoulder.

"Never mind, my child. Perhaps we'll disappoint him yet. Tell me all about it."

She told him everything, for he had bowels of compassion. "We can't put you on at present," he said, "but our saloon contractor wants a young lady to give out programmes, and if that will do to begin with——"

It was a crushing disappointment, but she was helpless. The employment was menial, but it would take her out of the tobacco shop and put her into the atmosphere of the theatre, and bring fifteen shillings a week as well. She might begin on Monday if she could find her black dress, white apron, cap, and cuffs. The dress she had already, but the apron, cap, and cuffs would take the larger part of the money she had left.

By Sunday night she had swallowed her pride with one great gulp, and was writing home to Aunt Anna:—

I'm as busy as Trap's wife these days—indeed that goddess of industry is nothing to me now; but Christmas is coming, and I shall want to buy a present for grandfather (and perhaps for the aunties as well), so please send me

a line in secret saying what he is wanting most. Snow! snow! snow! The snow it snoweth every day."

On the Monday evening she presented herself at the theatre, and was handed over to another girl to be instructed in her duties. The house was one of the best in London, and Glory found pleasure in seeing the audience assemble. For the first half-hour the gorgeous gowns, the beautiful faces, and the distinguished manners excited her and made her forget herself. Then little by little there came the pain of it all, and by the time the curtain had gone up her gorge was rising, and she crept out into the quiet corridor, where her colleague was seated already under an electric lamp reading a penny number.

The girl was a little tender black and white thing, looking like a dahlia. In a quarter of an hour Glory knew all about her. During the day she served in a shop in the Whitechapel Road. Her name was Agatha Jones—they called her Aggie. Her people lived in Bethnal Green, but Charlie always came to the theatre to take her home. Charlie was her young man.

In the intervals between the acts Glory assisted in the cloak-room, and there the great ladies began to be very amusing. After the tinkle of the electric bell announcing the second act she returned to the deserted corridor, and before her audience of one gave ridiculous imitations in dead silence of ladies using the puff and twiddling up their front hair.

"My! It's you as oughter be on the styge, my dear," said Aggie.

"Do you think so?" said Glory.

"I'm going on myself soon. Charlie's getting me on the clubs."

"The clubs?"

"The foreign clubs in Soho. More nor one has begun there."

"Really?"

"The foreigners like dancing best. If you can do the splits and shoulder the leg it's the mykings of you for life."

When the performance was over they found Charlie waiting on the square in front of the house. Glory had seen him before, and she recognised him immediately. He was the young Cockney with the rolled fringe who had bantered the policeman by Palace Yard on Lord Mayor's Day. They got into the Underground together, and when Glory returned to the subject of the foreign clubs Charlie grew animated and eloquent.

"They give ye five shillings a turn, and if yer good for anythink ye may do six turns of a Sunday night, not ter speak of special nights and friendly leads and sech."

When Glory got out at the Temple, Aggie's head was resting on Charlie's shoulder and her little gloved fingers were lightly clasped in his hand.

On the second night Glory had conquered a good deal of her pride. The grace of her humour was saving her. It was almost as if somebody else was doing servant's duty and she was looking on and laughing. After all, it was very funny that she should be there, and what delicious thoughts it would bring later! Even Nell Gwynn sold oranges in the pit at first; and then, some day, when she had risen above all this . . .

It must have been a great night of some sort. She had noticed red baize and an awning outside, and the front of one of the boxes was laden with flowers. When its occupants entered, the orchestra played the national anthem and the audience rose to their feet. It was the

Prince with the Princess and their daughters. The audience was only less distinguished, and something far off and elusive moved in her memory when a lady handed her a check and said in a sweet voice—

"A gentleman will come for this seat."

Glory's station was in the stalls, and she did not go out when the lights went down and the curtain rose. The play was a modern one—the story of a country girl who returned home after a life of bitterness and shame.

It moved her and thrilled her and stirred the smouldering fires of her ambition. She was sorry for the actress who played the part, the poor thing did not understand, and she would have given worlds to pour her own voice through the girl's mouth. Then she was conscious that she was making a noise with her hands, and looking down at them she saw the crumpled programmes and her white cuffs, and remembered where she was and what, and she murmured, "O God, do not punish me for these vain thoughts!"

All at once a light shot across her face as she stood in the darkness. The door of the corridor had been opened and a gentleman was coming in. He stood a moment beside her with his eyes on the stage and said in a whisper—

"Did a lady leave a seat?"

It was Drake! She felt as if she would suffocate, but answered in a strained voice—

"Yes, that one—programme, please."

He took the programme without looking at her, put his fingers into his waistcoat pocket, and slid something into her hand. It was sixpence.

She could have screamed. The humiliation was too abject. Hurrying out, she threw down her papers, put on her cloak and hat, and fled.

But next morning she laughed at herself, and when she took out Drake's sixpence she laughed again. With the poker and a nail she drove a hole through the coin, and then hung it up by a string to a hook over the mantelpiece, and laughed (and cried a little) every time she looked at it. Life was so funny! Why did people bury themselves before they were dead? She wouldn't do it for worlds. But she did not go back to the theatre for all that, and neither did she return to the counter.

Christmas was near, the shops became bright and gay, and she remembered what beautiful presents she had meant to send home out of the money she had hoped to earn. On Christmas Eve the streets were thronged with little family groups out shopping, and there were many amusing sights. Then she laughed a good deal—she could not keep from laughing.

Christmas Day opened with a rimy, hazy morning, and the business thoroughfares were deserted. They had sucking-pig for dinner, and Mr. Jupe, who was at home for the holiday, behaved like a great boy. It was afternoon before the postman arrived with a bag as big as a creel, full of Christmas cards and parcels. There was a letter for Glory. It was from Aunt Anna.

"We are concerned about the serious step you have taken, but trust it is for the best, and that you will give Mrs. Jupe every satisfaction. Don't waste your savings on us. Remember there are post-office savings banks everywhere, and that there is no friend like a little money."

At the bottom there was a footnote from Aunt Rachel: "Do you ever see the Queen in London, and the dear Prince and Princess?"

She went to service that night at St. Paul's Cathedral. Entering by the west door, a verger in a black cloak

directed her to a seat in the nave. The great place was dark and chill and half empty. All the singing seemed to come from some unseen regions far away, and when the preacher got into the curious pulpit, he looked like a Jack-in-the-box, and it seemed to be a drum that was speaking.

Coming out before the end, she thought she would walk to the Whitechapel Road, of which Aggie had told her something. She did so, going by Bishopsgate Street, but turning her head away as she passed the church of the Brotherhood. The motley crowd of Polish Jews, Germans, and Chinamen, in the most interesting street in Europe, amused her for awhile, and then she walked up Houndsditch and passed through Bishopsgate Street again.

At the Bank she took an omnibus for home. The only other fare was a bouncing girl in a big hat with feathers.

"Going to the market, my dear? No? I hates it myself, too, so I goes to the 'alls instead. Come from the country, don't ye? Same here. Father's a farmer, but he's got sixteen besides me, so I won't be missed. Live? I live at Mother Nan's dress-house now. Nice gloves, ain't they? My hat? Glad you like the style. I generally get a new hat once a week, and as for gloves, if anybody likes me——"

That night in her musty bedroom Glory wrote home while little Slyboots slept:—

"'The best laid schemes o' mice and men gang aft aglee.'

"Witness me!

"I intended to send you some Christmas presents, but the snow has been so industrious that not a mouse has stirred if he could help it. However, I send three big kisses instead and a pair of mittens for grandfather,

worked with my own hands, because I wouldn't allow any good Brownie to do it for me. Tell Aunt Rachel I *do* see the Prince and Princess sometimes. I saw them at the theatre the other night. Yes, the theatre! You must not be shocked—we are rather gay in London—we go to the theatre occasionally. It is so interesting to meet all the great people. You see I am fairly launched in fashionable society, but I love everybody just the same as ever, and the moment the candle is out I shall be thinking of Glenfaba and seeing the 'Waits,' and 'Oiel Verree,' and 'Hunting the Wren,' and grandfather smoking his pipe in the study by the light of the fire, and Sir Thomas Traddles, the tailless, purring and blinking at his feet. Merry Christmas to you, my dears. Bye-bye!"

VIII.

"'WHERE's that bright young Irish laidy?' the gentlemen's allwiz sayin', my dear," said Mrs. Jupe; and for very shame's sake, having no money to pay for board and lodgings, Glory returned to the Counter.

A little beyond Bedford Row, in a rookery of apartment houses in narrow streets, there lives a colony of ballet-girls and chorus-girls who are employed at the lighter theatres of the Strand. They are a noisy, merry, reckless, harmless race, free of speech, fond of laughter, wearing false jewellery, false hair, and false complexions, but good boots always, which they do their utmost not to conceal.

Many of these girls pass through the Turnstile on their way to their work, and towards seven in the evening the tobacconist's would be full of them. Nearly all smoked, as the stained forefinger of their right hands showed, and while they bought their cigarettes they chirruped and

chirped until the little shop was like a tree full of linnets in the spring.

Most of them belonged to the Frailty Theatre, and their usual talk was of the "stars" engaged there. Chief among these were the "Sisters Bellman," a trio of singers in burlesque, and a frequent subject of innuendo and repartee was one Betty, of that ilk, whose name Glory could remember to have seen blazing in gold on nearly every hoarding and sign.

"Says she was a governess in the country, my dear." "Oh yus, I daresay. Came out of a slop-shop in the Mile-End Road though, and learnt 'er steps with the organ-man in the court a-back of the jam-factory." "Well, I never! She's a wide un, she is!" "About as wide as Broad Street, my dear. Use ter sell flowers in Piccadilly Circus till somebody spoke to 'er, and now she rides 'er brougham, doncher know." Then the laughter would be general, and the girls would go off with their arms about each other's waists, and singing, in the street substitute for the stage whisper, "And 'er golden 'air was 'anging dahn 'er back!"

This yellow-haired and yellow-fingered sisterhood saw the game of life pretty clearly, and it did not take them long to get abreast of Glory. "Like this life, my dear!" "Go on! Do she look as if she liked it?"

"Perhaps I do, perhaps I don't," said Glory.

"Tell that to the marines, my dear. I use ter be in a shop myself, but I couldn't a-bear it. Give me my liberty, I say: and if a girl's got any sort of figure—— Unnerstand, my dear?"

Late that night one of the girls came in breathless and cried, "Hooraa! What d'ye think? Betty wants a dresser, and I've got the shop for ye, my dear. Guinea

a week and the pickings, and you go to-morrow night on trial. Bye-bye!"

Glory's old infirmity came back upon her, and she felt hot and humiliated. But her vanity was not so much wounded by the work that she was offered, as her honour was hurt by the work she was doing. Mrs. Jupe's absences from home were now more frequent than ever. If the business that took her abroad was akin to that which had taken her to Polly Love——

To put an end to her uneasiness, Glory presented herself at the stage-door.

"You the noo dresser, miss?" said the doorkeeper. "Collins has orders to look after you. Collins!"

A scraggy, ugly, untidy woman who was passing through an inner door looked back and listened.

"Come along of me, then," she said, and Glory followed her, first down a dark passage, then through a dusty avenue between stacks of scenery, then across the open stage, up a flight of stairs and into a room of moderate size, which had no window and no ventilation, and contained three cheval glasses, a couch, four cane-bottom chairs, three small toilet-tables with gas jets suspended over them, three large trunks, some boxes of cigarettes, and a number of empty champagne bottles. Here there was another woman, as scraggy and untidy as the first, who bobbed her head at Glory and then went on with her work, which was that of taking gorgeous dresses out of one of the trunks and laying them on the end of the couch.

"She told me to show you her first act," said the woman called Collins, and throwing open another of the trunks, she indicated some of the costumes contained in it.

It was a new world to Glory, and there was something

tingling and electrical in the atmosphere about her. There were the shouts and curses of the scene-shifters on the stage, the laughing voices of the chorus-girls going by the door, and all the multitudinous noises of the theatre before the curtain rises. Presently there was a rustle of silk, and two young ladies came bouncing into the room. One was tall and pink and white, like a scarlet runner, the other was little and dainty. They stared at Glory, and she was compelled to speak.

"Miss Bellman, I presume?"

"Ye mean Betty, down't ye?" said the tall lady, and at that moment Betty herself arrived. She was a plump person with a kind of vulgar comeliness, and Glory had a vague sense of having seen her before somewhere.

"So ye've come," she said, and she took possession of Glory straightway. "Help me off of my sealskin."

Glory did so, the others were similarly disrobed, and in a few moments their three ladyships were busy before the toilet-tables with their grease and rose pink and black pencils.

Glory was taking down the hair of her stout ladyship, and her stout ladyship was looking at Glory in the glass.

"Not a bad face, girls, eh?"

The other two glanced at Glory approvingly. "Not bad," they answered, and then hummed or whistled as they went on with their making-up.

"Oh, *thank* you," said Glory with a low curtsy, and everybody laughed. It was really very amusing. Suddenly it ceased to be so.

"And what's its nyme, my dear?" said the little lady.

A sort of shame at using in this company the name that was sacred to home, to the old parson, and to John Storm, came creeping over Glory like a goosing of the

flesh, and by the inspiration of a sudden memory she answered, "Gloria."

The little lady paused with the black pencil at her eyebrows and said—

"My! What a nyme for the top line of a bill!"

"Ugh! Mykes me feel like Sundays, though," said the tall lady with a shudder.

"Irish, my dear?"

"Something of that sort," said Glory.

"Brought up a laidy, I'll be bound?"

"My father was a clergyman," said Glory, "but——"

A sudden peal of laughter stopped her, whereupon she threw up her head and her eyes flashed, but her stout ladyship patted her hand and said—

"No offence, Glo, but you really mustn't—they're *all* clergymen's daughters, doncher know."

A sharp knock came to the door, followed by the first call of the call-boy, "Half-hour, ladies." Then there was much bustle and some irritation in the dressing-room, and the tuning up of the orchestra outside. The knock came again, "Curtain up, please." The door was thrown open, the three ladies swept out—the tall one in tights, the little one in a serpentine skirt, the plump one in some fancy costume—and Glory was left to gather up the fragments, to listen to the orchestra, which was now in full power—to think of it all and to laugh.

The ladies returned to the dressing-room again and again in the course of the performance, and when not occupied with the changing of their dresses they amused themselves variously. Sometimes they smoked cigarettes, sometimes sent Collins for brandy and soda, sometimes talked of their friends in front—"Lord Johnny's 'ere again. See 'im in the prompt box? It's 'is sixtieth night this

piece, and there's only been sixty-nine of the run"—and sometimes they discussed the audience generally—"Don't know what's a matter with 'em to-night; ye may work yer eyes out, and ye can't get a 'and."

The curtain came down at length, the outdoor costumes were resumed, the call-boy cried "Carriages, please," the ladies answered "Right ye are, Tommy," her plump ladyship nodded to Glory, "You'll do middling, my dear, when ye get yer 'and in;" and then nothing was left but the dark stage, the blank house, and the "Good night, Miss," of the porter at the stage-door.

So these were favourites of the footlights! And Glory Quayle was dressing and undressing them and preparing them for the stage! Next morning before rising Glory tried to think it out. Were they so very beautiful? Glory stretched up in bed to look at herself in the glass, and lay down again with a smile. Were they so much cleverer than other people? It was foolishness to think of it, for they were as empty as a drum. There must be some explanation, if a girl could only find it out.

The second night at the theatre passed much like the first, except that the ladies were visited between the acts by a group of fellow-artistes from another company, and then the free-and-easy manners of familiar intercourse gave way to a style that was most circumspect and precise, and, after the fashion of great ladies, they talked together of morning calls and leaving cards and five-o'clock tea.

There was a scene in the performance in which the three girls sang together, and Glory crept out to the head of the stairs to listen. When she returned to the dressing-room her heart was bounding, and her eyes, as she saw them in the glass, seemed to be leaping out of her head.

It was ridiculous! To think of all that fame, all that fuss about voices like those, about singing like that, while she . . . If she could only get a hearing!

But the cloud had chased the sunshine from her face in a moment, and she was murmuring again, "O God, do not punish a vain presumptuous creature!"

All the same she felt happy and joyous, and on the third night she was down at the theatre earlier than the other dressers, and was singing to herself as she laid out the costumes, for her heart was beginning to be light. Suddenly she became aware of someone standing at the open door. It was an elderly man with a bald head and an owlish face. He was the stage-manager; his name was Sefton.

"Go on, my girl," he said. "If you've got a voice like that why don't you let somebody hear it?"

Her plump ladyship arrived late that night, and her companions were dressed and waiting when she swept into the room like a bat with outstretched wings, crying, "Out o' the wy! Betty Bellman's coming! She's lyte."

There were numerous little carpings, backbitings, and hypocrisies during the evening, and they reached a climax when Betty said, "Lord Bobbie is coming round to-night, my dear." "Not if *I* know it, my love," said the tall lady. "We are goin' to supper at the Nell Gwynn club, my dearest." "Surprised at ye, my darling." "*You* are a nice one to preach, my pet!"

After that encounter two of their ladyships, who were kissing and hugging on the stage, were no longer on speaking terms in the dressing-room, and as soon as might be after the curtain had fallen, the tall lady and the little one swept out of the place with mysterious asides about

a "friend being a friend," and not staying there to see nothing done shabby."

"If she don't like she needn't, my dear," said the boycotted one, and then she dismissed Glory for the night with a message to the friend who would be waiting on the stage.

The atmosphere of the dressing-room had become oppressive and stifling that night, and, notwithstanding the exaltation of her spirits since the stage-manager had spoken to her, Glory was sick and ashamed. The fires of her ambition were struggling to burn under the drenching showers that had fallen upon her modesty, and she felt confused and compromised.

As she stepped down the stairs the curtain was drawn up, the auditorium was a void, the stage was dark, save for a single gas jet that burned at the prompter's wing, and a gentleman in evening dress was walking to and fro by the extinguished footlights. She was about to step up to the man when she recognised him, and turning on her heel she hurried away. It was Lord Robert Ure, and the memory that had troubled her at the first sight of Betty was of the woman who had ridden with Polly Love on the day of the Lord Mayor's Show. Feeling hot and foolish and afraid, she was scurrying through the dark passages when someone called to her. It was the stage-manager.

"I should like to hear your voice again, my dear. Come down at eleven in the morning sharp. The leader of the orchestra will be here to play."

She made some confused answer of assent, and then found herself in the back street, panting audibly and taking long breaths of the cold night air. She was dizzy and was feeling, as she had never felt before, that she

wanted one to lean upon. If anybody had said to her at that moment, "Come out of the atmosphere of that hot-bed, my child, it is full of danger and the germs of death," she would have left everything behind and followed him, whatever the cost or sacrifice. But she had no one, and the pain of her yearning and the misery of her shame were choking her.

Before going home she walked over to the hospital; but no, there was still no letter from John Storm. There was one from Drake, many days overdue:—

"Dear Glory,—Hearing that you call for your letters, I write to ask if you will not let me know where you are and how the world is using you. Since the day we parted in St. James's Park I have often spoken of you to my friend Miss Macquarrie, and I am angry with myself when I remember what remarkable talents you have, and that they are only waiting for the right use to be made of them. Yours most kindly,

"F. H. N. Drake."

"Many thanks, good Late-i'-th'-day," she thought, and she was crushing the letter in her hand when she saw there was a postscript:—

"*P.S.*—This being the Christmas season, I have given myself the pleasure of sending a parcel of Yule-tide goodies to your dear old grandfather and his sweet and simple household; but as they have doubtless long forgotten me, and I do not wish to embarrass them with unnecessary obligations, I will ask you not to help them to the identification of its source."

She straightened out the letter and folded it, put it in her pocket and returned home. Another letter was waiting for her there. It was from the Parson:—

"So you sent us a Christmas-box after all! That was just like my runaway, all innocent acting and make-believe. What joy we had of it!—Rachel and myself, I mean, for we had to carry on the fiction that Aunt Anna knew nothing about it, she being vexed at the thought of our spendthrift spending so much money. Chalse brought it into the parlour while Anna was upstairs, and it might have been the ark going up to Jerusalem, it entered in such solemn stillness. Oh dear! oh dear! The bun-loaf, and the almonds, and the cheese, and the turkey, and the pound of tobacco and the mull of snuff! On account of Anna everything had to be conducted in great quietness, but it was a terribly leaky sort of silence, I fear, and there were hot and hissing whispers. God bless you for your thought and care of us! Coming so timely, it is like my dear one herself, a gift that cometh from the Lord; and when people ask me if I am not afraid that my granddaughter should be all alone in that great and wicked Babylon, I tell them 'No; you don't know my Glory! she is all courage and nerve and power, a perfect bow of steel, quivering with sympathy and strength.'"

IX.

Christmas had come and gone at the Brotherhood, and yet the project was unfulfilled. John himself had delayed its fulfilment from one trivial cause after another. The night was too dark or not dark enough; the moon shone or was not shining. His real obstacle was his superstitious fear. The scheme was very easy of execu-

tion, and the Father himself had made it so. This and the Father's trust in him had almost wrecked the enterprise. Only his own secret anxieties, which were interpreted to his consciousness by the sight of Brother Paul's wasting face, sufficed to sustain his purpose.

"The man's dying. It cannot be unpleasing to God."

He said this to himself again and again, as one presses the pain in one's side to make sure it is still there. Under the shadow of the crisis his character was going to ruin. He grew cunning and hypocritical, and could do nothing that was not false in reality or appearance. When the Father passed him he would drop his head, and it was taken for contrition, and he was commended for humility.

It was now the last day of the year, and therefore the last of his duty at the door.

"It must be to-night," he whispered, as Paul passed him.

Paul nodded. Since the plan of escape had been projected he had lost all will of his own, and become quite passive and inert.

How the day lingered! And when the night came it dragged along with feet of lead. It seemed as if the hour of evening recreation would never end. Certain of the brothers who had been away on preaching missions throughout the country had returned for the Feast of the Circumcision, and the house was bright with fresh faces and cheerful voices. John thought he had never before heard so much laughter in the monastery.

But the bell rang for Compline, and the brothers passed into church. It was a cold night, the snow was trodden hard, and the wind was rising. The service ended, and the brothers returned to the house with

clasped hands, and passed up to their cells in silence, leaving Brother Paul at his penance in the church.

Finally the Father put up his hood and went out to lock the gate, and the dog, who took this for his signal, shambled up and followed him. When he returned he shuddered and shrugged his shoulders.

"A bitter night, my son," he said. "It's like courting death to go out in it. Heaven help all homeless wanderers on a night like this."

He was wiping the snow from his slippers.

"So this is the last day of your penance, Brother Storm, and to-morrow morning you will join us in the community-room. You have done well; you have fought a good fight and resisted the assaults of Satan. Good-night to you, my son, and God bless you!"

He took a few steps forward and then stopped. "By the way, I promised you the 'Life of Père Lacordaire,' and you might come to my room now and fetch it."

The Father's room was on the ground-floor to the left of the staircase, and it was entered from a corridor which cut the house across the middle. The rooms that opened out of this corridor to the front looked on the courtyard, and those to the back looked across the City in the direction of the Thames. The Father's room opened to the back. It was as bare of ornament as any of the cells, but it had a small fire and a writing-table on which a lamp was burning.

As they entered the room together the Father hung the key of the gate on one of many hooks above the bed. It was the third hook from the end nearest the window, and the key was an old one with very few wards. John watched all this, and even observed that there were books on the floor, and that a man might stumble if he

did not walk warily. The Father picked up one of them.

"This is the book, my son. A most precious document, the very mirror of a living human soul. What touched me most perhaps were the Father's references to his mother. A monk may not have his mother to himself, and if the love of woman is much to him, he is miserable indeed until he has fixed his eyes on the most blessed among women. But the religious life does not destroy natural affection. It only kills in order to bring forth new life. The corn of wheat dies that it may live again. That is the true Christian asceticism, my son, and so it is with our vows. Good-night!"

As John was coming out of the Father's room he met Brother Andrew going into it with clean linen over one arm and a ewer of water in the other hand. He threw on his bed in the alcove the book which the Father had given him, and sat down on the form at the door and tried to strengthen himself in his purpose.

"The man is dying for the sight of his sister. He can save her soul if he can only see her. It cannot be displeasing to the Almighty."

When he lifted his head the house was silent, except for the wind that whistled outside. Presently there was a scarcely perceptible click, as of a door closing, and Brother Andrew came from the direction of the Superior's room. John called to him and he stepped up on tiptoe, for the monk hates noise as an evil spirit. The sprawling features of the big fellow were all smiles.

"Has the Father gone to bed?" said John.

"Yes."

"Just gone?"

"No—half-an-hour ago."

"Then he will be asleep by this time."

"He was asleep before I left him."

"So he doesn't lock his door on the inside?"

"No, never."

"Does the Father sleep soundly?"

"Sometimes he does and sometimes a cat would waken him."

"Brother Andrew——"

"Yes."

"Would you do something for me if I wanted it very much?"

"You know I would."

"Even if you had to run some risk?"

"I'm not afraid of that."

"And if I got you into trouble perhaps?"

"But you wouldn't. You wouldn't get anybody into trouble."

John could go no further. The implicit trust in the simple face was too much for him.

"What is it?" said Brother Andrew.

"Oh, nothing—nothing at all," said John. "I was only trying you, but you are too good to be tempted, and I am ashamed. You must go to bed now."

"Can I put out the lights for you?"

"No, I'm not ready yet. Ugh! what a cruel wind. A cold night for Brother Paul in the church."

"Tell me, Brother Storm, what is the matter with Brother Paul? He makes me think of my mother, I don't know why."

John made no answer, and the lay brother began to go upstairs. Two steps up he stopped and whispered—

"Won't you let me do something for you, then?"

"Not to-night, Brother Andrew."

"Good-night, Brother Storm."

"Good-night, my lad."

John listened to his footsteps until they stopped far overhead, and then all was quiet. Only the whistling of the wind broke the stillness of the peaceful house. He slid back the grating and looked out. All was darkness except for the tiny gleam of coloured light that came from the church, where Brother Paul sat to say his Rosary.

This fortified his courage, and he got up to put out the lamps in the staircase and corridors. He began at the top, and as he came down he listened on every landing and looked carefully around. There was no sound anywhere except the light fall of his own deadened footstep. His superstitious fears came back upon him and his restless conscience created terrors. The old London mansion, with its mystic cells, seemed full of strange shadows, and the wind howled around it like a fiend. One by one he extinguished the lamps. The last of them hung in the hall under the picture of Christ in His crown of thorns. As he put it out he thought the eyes looked at him, and he shuddered.

It was now half-past ten, and time to carry out his project. The back of his neck was aching, and his breath was coming quick. With noiseless steps he walked to the door of the Father's room and listened again. Hearing nothing, he opened the door wide and stepped into the room.

The fire was slumbering out, but it cast a faint red glow on the ceiling and on the bed. A soft light rested on the Father's face and he was sleeping peacefully. There was no sound except the wind in the chimney and a whistle sounding from a steamer in the river.

To reach the key where it hung above the bed it was necessary to step between the fire and the sleeping man.

As John did so his black shadow fell on the Father's face. He stretched out his hand for the key and found that a bunch of other keys were now hanging over it. When he removed them they jingled slightly, and then his heart stood still, but the Father did not stir, and he took the key of the gate off the hook, put the other keys back in their place, and turned to go.

The dog began to howl—somebody was playing music in the street—and the open door made the wind to roar in the chimney. The Father sighed, and John stood with a quivering heart and looked over his shoulder. But it was only a deep human sigh uttered in sleep.

At the next moment John had returned to the corridor and closed the door behind him. His throat was parched, his eyelids were twitching, and his temples were beating like drums. He went gliding along like a thief, and as he passed the picture of Christ in the darkness the wind seemed to be crying "Judas!"

Back in the hall, he dropped on to the form, for his knees could support him no longer. Love and conscience, humanity and religion, clamoured loud in his heart and tore him to pieces. "Traitor!" cried one. "But the man's dying," cried another. "Judas!" "She is hovering on the brink of hell and he may save her soul from death and damnation!" When the struggle was over, conscience and religion were worsted and he was more cunning than before.

Then the clock chimed the three-quarters and he raised his head. The streets, usually so quiet at that hour, were becoming noisy with traffic. There were the shuffling of many feet on the hard snow and the sharp crack of voices.

He opened the great door of the house with as little

noise as possible and stepped out into the courtyard. The bloodhound started from its quarters and began to growl, but he silenced it with a word, and the creature came up and licked his hand. He crossed the court with quick and noiseless footsteps, lifted the latch of the sacristy and pushed through to the church.

There was a low droning sound in the empty place. It ran a space and was then sucked in like the sound of the sea at the harbour steps. Brother Paul was sitting in the chancel with a lamp on the stall by his side. His head leaned forward, his eyes were closed, and the light on his thin face made it look pallid and lifeless. John called to him in a whisper.

"Paul!"

He rose quickly and followed John into the courtyard, looking wild and weak and lost.

"But the lamp—I've forgotten it," he said. "Shall I go back and put it out?"

"How simple you are," said John. "Somebody may be lying awake in the house. Do you want him to see that you've left your penance an hour too soon?"

"True."

"Come this way—quietly."

They passed on tiptoe into the passage leading to the street, where some flickering gleams of the light without fell over them.

"Where's your hat?" said John.

"I forgot that too—I left it in the church."

"Take mine," said John, "and put up your hood and button your cassock—it's a cruel night."

"But I'm afraid," said Paul.

"Afraid of what?"

"Now that the time has come, I'm afraid to learn the truth about her. After all, uncertainty is hope, you know, and then——"

"Tut! Be a man! Don't give way at the last moment. Here, tie my handkerchief about your neck! How helpless you are, though. I've half a mind to go myself instead."

"But you don't know what I want to say, and if you did you couldn't say it."

"Then listen! Are you listening?"

"Yes."

"Go to the hospital where your sister used to be a nurse."

"Martha's Vineyard?"

"Ask for Nurse Quayle—will you remember?"

"Nurse Quayle."

"If she is on night duty she will see you at once. But if she is on day duty, she may be in bed and asleep, and in that case——"

"What?"

"Here, take this letter. Have you got it?"

"Yes."

"Give it to the porter. Tell him it comes from the former chaplain—you remember. Say it concerns a matter of great importance, and ask him to send it up to the dormitories immediately. Then——"

"Well?"

"Then *she* must tell you what to do next."

"But if she is out?"

"She may be—this is New-Year's Eve."

"Ah!"

"Wait in the porch till she comes in again."

John's impetuous will was carrying everything before it, and the helpless creature began to overwhelm him with grateful blessings.

"Pooh! We'll not talk of that . . . Have you any money?"

"No."

"Neither have I. I brought nothing here except the little in my purse, and I gave that up on entering."

"I don't want any—I can walk."

"It will take you an hour, then."

A clock was striking somewhere. "Hush! One, two, three . . . eleven o'clock. It will be midnight when you get there. Now go."

The key was grating in the lock of the gate. "Remember! Lauds, at six in the morning."

"I'll be back at five."

"And I'll open the gate at 5.30. Only six hours to do everything."

"Good-night, then."

"Wait!"

"What is it?"

"Paul was in the street, but John was in the darkness of the passage.

"Very likely you'll cross London in a cab with her."

"My sister?"

"Your sister went to live somewhere in St. John's Wood, I remember."

"St. John's Wood?"

"Tell her"—John was striving to keep his voice firm —"Tell her I am happy—and cheerful—and looking strong and well, you know."

"But you're not. You're too good, and you're wearing yourself away in my——"

"Tell her I am often thinking of her, and if she has anything to say—anything to send—any word —any message . . . It can't be displeasing to the Almighty . . . But no matter! Go, go!"

The key had grated in the lock again, the lay brother was gone, and John was left alone.

"God pity and forgive me!" he muttered, and then he turned away.

The traffic in the streets was increasing every moment, and as he stumbled across the courtyard a drunken man going by the gate stopped and cried into the passage, "Helloa, there! I'm a watchin' of ye!" The bloodhound leapt up and barked, but John hurried into the house and clashed the door.

He sat on the form and tried to compose himself. He thought of Paul as he had seen him at the last moment—the captured eagle with the broken wing scudding into the night, the night of London, but free, free!

In his mind's eye he followed him through the streets —down Bishopsgate Street into Threadneedle Street, and along Cheapside to St. Paul's Churchyard. Crowds of people would be there to-night waiting for the striking of the clock at midnight, that they might raise a shout and wish each other a happy New Year.

That made him think of Glory. She would be there too, for she loved a rich and abounding life. He could see her quite plainly in the midst of the throng with her sparkling eyes and bounding step. It would be so new to her, so human and so beautiful. Glory! Always Glory!

He thought he must have been dreaming, for suddenly the clocks were all striking, first the clock in the hall, then the clocks of the churches round about, and finally the great clock of the Cathedral. Almost at the same

moment there was a distant sound like the rattle of musketry, and then the church-bells began to ring.

The noises in the streets were now tumultuous. People were shouting and laughing. Some of them were singing. At one moment it was a Salvation chorus, at the next a music-hall ditty, First, "At the Cross, at the Cross," then "Mr. 'Enry 'Awkins," and then an unfamiliar ditty. With measured steps over the hardened snow of the pavement, there came tramping along a line of boys and girls crying—

"D'ye ken John Peel with his coat so gay?
D'ye ken John Peel at the break of day?
D'ye ken John P-e-e-l . . ."

Their shrill trebles broke like a rocket on the topmost note, and there was loud laughter.

"Glory again. Always, always Glory!"

Then the scales fell from his eyes, and he saw himself as he was, a self-deluded man and a cheat. The impulses that had prompted him to this night's work had really centred in Glory. It had been Glory first and Glory last, and his pity for Brother Paul and his fear for the fate of Polly had been only a falsehood and pretence.

The night wind was still howling about the house. Its noise mingled with the peal of the church-bells, and together they seemed to utter the voices of mocking fiends: Judas! Traitor! Fool! Fool! Traitor! Judas!

He covered his ears with his hands, and his head fell into his breast.

X.

THE LITTLE TURNSTILE,
New Year's Eve.

HOORAA! hooraa!

Feeling like bottled yeast this evening and liable to go off, I thank my stars I have three old babies at home to whom I am bound to tell everything. So lizzen, lizzen, for all! Know ye, then, all men (and women), by these presents, that there is a gentleman in London who predicts wonderful things for Glory. His name is Sefton, and I came to know him through three ladies—I call them the Three Graces—whose acquaintance I have made by coming to live here. He is only an old mushroom, with a bald, white head; and if I believed everything their ladyships say, I should conclude that he is one of those who never sin except twice a year, and that is all the time before Christmas and all the time after it. But their Graces belong to that saintly sisterhood who would take away the devil's character if they needed it (they don't), and though the mushroom's honour were as scarce as the middle cut in salmon, yet in common loyalty Glory would have to believe in it.

It is all about my voice. Hearing it by accident when I was humming about the house like a blue-bottle, he asked me to let him hear it again in a place where he could judge of it to more advantage. That turned out to be a theatre—yes, indeed, a theatre—but it was the middle of the morning, and nobody was there except ourselves and a couple of cleaners, so Aunt Anna needn't be afraid. Yes, the chief of the orchestra was present, and he sat before a piano on the edge of the maelstrom, in what we should call the High Bailiff's pews—but they

call them the stalls—while the mushroom himself went back to the cavernous depths of the body, which in a theatre they have properly christened the pit, and this morning it looked like the bottomless one.

Lor'-a-massey! Ever see the inside of a theatre in the day-time? Of course you've not, my dears. It is what the world itself was the day before the first day—without form and void, and darkness on the face of the deep. Not a ray of daylight anywhere, except the adulterated kind that comes mooching round corridors and prowling in at half-open doors, and floating through the sepulchral gloom like the sleepy eyes of the monsters that terrified me in the caves at Gob-ny-Deigan when I used to play pirate, you remember.

The gentlemen had left me alone on the stage with five or six footlights—which they ought to call face-lights—flashing in my eyes, and when the pianist began to vamp and I to sing, it was like pitching my voice into a tunnel, and I became so dreadfully nervous that I was forced to laugh. That seemed to vex my unseen audience, who thought me "rot"; so I said, "Let there be more light then," and there was more light, "and let the piano cease from troubling," and it was so. Then I just stiffened my back and gave them one of mother's French songs, and after the first verse I called out to the manager at the back, "Can you hear me?" and he called back, "Go on; it's splendid!" So I did "Mylecharaine" in the Manx, and I suppose I acted both of my songs; but I was only beginning to be aware that my voice in that great place was a little less like a barrel-organ than usual, when suddenly there came a terrific clatter, such as comes with the ninth wave on the shingle, and my two

dear men in the dark were clapping the skin of their hands off!

Oh, my dears, my dears! If you only knew how for weeks and weeks I had been moaning and lamenting that it was because I wasn't clever that people took no notice of me, you would forgive a vain creature when she said to herself, "My daughter, you are really somebody after all—you, you, you!" It was a beautiful moment though, and when the old mushroom came back to the stage saying, "What a voice! What expression! What nature!" I felt like falling on his bald head and kissing it, not being able to speak for lumps in the throat, and feeling like the Methodist lady who poured out whisky for the class-leaders after they had presented her with a watch, and then told the reporters to say she had suitably responded.

Heigho! I have talked about the fashionable people I meet in London, but I don't want to be one of them. They do nothing but rush about, dress, gossip, laugh, love, and plunge into all the delights of life. That is not my idea of existence. I am ambitious. I want to do something. I am tired in my soul of doing nothing. Yes, it *has* been that all along, though I didn't like to tell you so before. There are people who are born in the midst of greatness and they don't know how to use it. But to be one of the world's celebrities, that is so different. To have won the heart of the world, so that the world knows you and thinks of you and loves you! Say it is by your voice you do it and that your world is the concert-hall, or even the music-hall—what matter? You needn't *live* music-hall, whatever the life inside of it. And then that great dark void peopled with faces that laugh or cry just

as you please to make them—confess that it would be magnificent, my dear ones!

I am to go again to-night to hear what Mr. Sefton has to propose, but already this dingy little bedroom smiles upon me, and even the broken tiles in the backyard might be the pavement of Paradise! If it is true what he tells me . . . Well, he that hath the bride is the bridegroom, and if my doings hereafter don't make your hair curl, I will try to show the inhabitants of this stupid old earth what a woman can do in spite of every disadvantage. I shall not be sorry to leave this place either. The rats in these old London houses (judging by the cries of woe) hold a nightly carnival for the eating up of the younger members of the family. And then Mrs. Jupe and Mr. Jupe—Mr. Dupe I call him; she deceiving him so dreadfully with her gadding about. . . . But anon, anon, good people!

It is New Year's Eve to-day, and nearly nine months since I came up to London. *Tempus fugit!* In fact, *tempus* is *fugit*-ing most fearfully, considering that I am twenty-one on Sunday next, you know, and that I haven't begun to do anything really. The snowdrops must be making a peep at Glenfaba by this time, and Aunt Rachel will be cutting slips of the rose-trees and putting them in pots. Yandher place must be *urromassy** nice though, with snow on the roof and the sloping lawn, and the windows glistening with frost, just like a girl in her Confirmation veil, as she stands back to look at herself in the glass. I intend to see the New Year in this time on the outside of St. Paul's Cathedral, where people congregate in thousands as twelve o'clock approaches, to carry on the beautiful fiction that there is still only one clock in Lon-

* Out of mercy.

don, and they have to hold their noses in the air to watch for the moment when it is going to strike. But in the midst of the light and life of this splendid city, I know my heart will go back with a tender twinge to the little dark streets on the edge of the sea, where the Methodist choirs will be singing "Hail, smiling morn," preparatory to coffee and currant-cake.

Who will be your "first foot" this year, I wonder? It was John Storm last year, you remember, and being as dark as a gipsy, he made a perfect *qualtagh*.* And how we laughed when, disguised in the snow that was falling at the time, he pretended to be a beggar, and came in just as grandfather was reading the bit about the Good Shepherd, and how He loved His lambs; and then I found him out! Ah me!

I am looking perfectly dazzling in a new hat to-day, having been going about hitherto in one of those little frights that used to be cocked up on the top of your hair like a hen on a corn-stack. But now I am carrying about the Prince of Wales's feathers, and if he could only see me himself in them——

You see what a scatter-brained creature I am! Leaving the hospital has made me grow so much younger every day, that I am almost afraid I may come to contemplate short frocks. But really it's the first time I've looked nice for an eternity, and now I entirely retract and repent me of all I said about wishing to be a man. Being a girl, I'll put up with it; and if all the old mushroom says on that head also is true . . . But then men are such funny things, bless them! GLORY.

P.S.—No word from John Storm yet. Apparently he

* Manx for "first foot."

never thinks of us now—of me, at all events; and I suppose he has resigned himself and taken the vows. That's one kind of religion, I dare say, but I can't understand it; and I don't know how a dog even can be nailed up to a wall and not go mad. In the night, lying in bed, I sometimes think of him. A dark cell, a bench for a bed, a crucifix, and no other furniture, praying with trembling limbs and chattering teeth. No; such things are too high for me; I cannot reach to them.

It seems impossible that *he* can be in London too. What a place this London is! Such a mixture! Fashion, religion, gaiety, devotion, pride, depravity, wealth, poverty! I find that, for a girl to succeed in London, her moral colour must be heightened a little. *Pinjane** alone won't do. Give her a slush of *pissaves,*** and she'll go down sweeter. Angels are not wanted here at all. The only angels there are in London are kept framed in the church windows, and I half suspect that even they were women once, and liked bread and butter. And then Nell Gwynne's flag floats from the steeple of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, and now and again they ring the bells for her!

XI.

At eleven o'clock that night Glory was putting on her hat and cloak to return home when the call-boy came to the dressing-room door to say that the stage-manager was waiting to see her. With a little catch in her breast, and then with a tightening of the heart-strings, she followed him to the stage-manager's office. It was a stuffy place over the porter's lodge, approached by a flight of circular

* Manx dish, like Devonshire junket.

** Preserves.

iron stairs and lumbered with many kinds of theatrical property.

"Come in, my dear," said the stage-manager, and pushing away some models of scenery he made room for her on a sofa which stood by a fast-dying fire. Then shutting the door, he bobbed his head at her and winked with both eyes, and said in a familiar whisper—

"It's all right, my dear. I've settled that little matter for you."

"Do you mean . . ." began Glory, and then she waited with parted lips.

"It's as good as done, my dear. Sit down." Glory had risen in her excitement. "Sit down and I'll tell you everything."

He had spoken to his management. "Gentlemen," he had said, "unless I'm mistaken, I've found a prize." They had laughed. He was always finding prizes. But he knew what he was talking about, and they had given him *carte blanche*.

"You think there is really some likelihood, then . . ." began Glory, with the catch in her breath again, for her throat was thick and her breast was heaving,

"Sit down, now, do sit down, my dear, and listen."

He was suave, he was flattering, he was intimate, he was coaxing. She was to leave everything to him. Of course there was much to be done yet. She had a wonderful voice; it was finer than music. She had style as well; it was astonishing how she had come by it. Only a dresser too—not even in the chorus. But stars were never turned out by nature. She had many things to learn, and would have to be coached up carefully before she could be brought out. He had done it for others, though, and he could do it for her, and if——

Glory's eyes were shining and her heart was beating like a drum.

"Then you think that eventually, if I work hard—after years perhaps——"

"You can't do it on your own, my dear, so leave yourself in my hands entirely, and don't whisper a word about it yet."

"Ah!" It was like a dream coming true; she could scarcely believe in it. The stage-manager became still more suave, and flattering, and familiar. If she "caught on" there was no knowing what he might not get for her —ten pounds a week—fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, even fifty perhaps.

Glory's palpitation was becoming painful, and at the bottom of her heart there was a certain fear of this sndden tide of fortune, as if Providence had somehow made a mistake and would as suddenly find it out. To appease her conscience she began to think of home and how happy she might make everybody there if God was really going to be so good to her. They should want for nothing; they should never know a poor day again.

Meantime the stage-manager was painting another picture. A girl didn't go a-begging if he once took her up. There was S——. She was only an "auricomous" damsel, serving in a tobacconist's shop in the Haymarket when he first found her, and now where was she?

"Of course I've no interest of my own to serve, my dear—none whatever. And there'll be lots of people to tempt you away from me when your name is made."

Glory uttered some vehement protest and then was lost in her dreams again.

"Well, well, we'll see," said the stage-manager. He was looking at her with glittering eyes.

"Do you know, my dear, you are a very fine-looking young woman?"

Glory's head was down, her face was flushed, and she was turning her mother's pearl ring around her finger. He thought she was overwhelmed by his praises, and coming closer, he said—

"Daresay you've got a good stage-figure too, eh? Pooh! Only business, you know! But you mustn't be shy with me, my dear. And besides, if I am to do all this for you, you must do something for me sometimes."

She hardly heard him. Her eyes were still glistening with the far-off look of one who gazes on a beautiful vision. "You are so good," she said. "I don't know what to say or how to thank you."

"This way," he whispered, and leaning over to her he lifted her face and kissed her.

Then her poor dream of glory and grandeur and happiness was dispelled in a moment, and she awoke with a sense of outrage and shame. The man's praises were flattery; his predictions were a pretence; he had not really meant it at all, and she had been so simple as to believe everything.

"Oh!" she said, with the feeble, childish cry of one who has received a pistol-wound in battle. And then she rose and turned to go. But the stage-manager, who was laughing noisily out of his hot red face, stepped between her and the door.

"My dear child, you can't mean . . . A trifle like that——"

"Open the door, please," she said in her husky voice.

"But surely you don't intend . . . In the profession we think nothing, you know——"

"Open the door, sir!"

"Really! upon my word——"

When she came to herself again she was out in the dark back street, and the snow was hard and dirty under foot, and the wind was high and cold, and she was running along and crying like a disappointed child.

The bitterest part of it all was the crushing certainty that she had no talents and no chances of success, and that the man had only painted up his fancy picture as a means of deceiving her. Oh, the misery of being a woman! Oh, the cruelty of this great, glorious, devilish London, where a girl, if she was poor and alone, could live only by her looks!

With God knows what lingering remnant of expectation, but feeling broken and beaten after her brave fight for life, and with the weak woman uppermost at last, she had turned towards the hospital. It was nearly half-past eleven when she got there, and Big Ben was chiming the half-hour as she ascended the steps. Bracing herself up, she looked in at the porter's door with a face that was doing its best to smile.

"Any letters to-night, porter?"

"Not to-night, Miss."

"No? Well, none to get, none to answer, you know. Happy New Year to you!"

But there was the sob in her laughter, and the man said, "I'd be sorry to miss your face, nurse, but if you'll leave your address I'll send your letters on and save you the journey so late at night."

"Oh, no—no, there'll be no more letters now, porter, and—I'll not come again. Here!"

"No, no, Miss."

"Yes, yes, you must!"

She forced a shilling into the porter's hand in spite

of his protests and then fled from the look in his face, which seemed to her to say that he would like to return her sixpence.

John Storm was lost to her. It was foolishness to go on expecting to hear from him. Had he not told her that the rule under which the brothers lived in community forbade them to write and receive letters except by special permission? But she had expected that something would happen—some accident, some miracle, she hardly knew what. That dream was over now; she was alone; it was no use deceiving herself any longer.

She went home by the back streets, for people were peering into her face, and she thought perhaps she had been crying. Late as it was, being New Year's Eve, there were groups about every corner, and in some of the flagged courts and alleys little girls were dancing to the music of the Italian organ-man or turning catherine-wheels. As she was going down Long Acre a creachy voice saluted her.

"Evening, Miss! Going home early, ain't ye?"

It was a miserable-looking woman in clothes that might have been stolen from a scarecrow.

"Market full to-night, my dear? Look as if the dodgers had been at ye. Live? I live off of the Lane. But lor' bless ye, I've lived in a many places! Seen the day I lived in Soho Square. I was on the 'alls then. Got a bit quisby on my top-notes, you know, and took the scarlet fever—soldier, I mean, my dear. But where's the use of frettin? I likes to be jolly, and I allwiz is. Doing now? Selling flowers outside the theatres—police is nasty if you've got nothink. Ain't I going home? Soon as I get a drain of white satin. Wish you luck, my dear! S'long!"

As she came up to the shop in the Turnstile, she could hear that it was noisy with the voices of men and girls, so she turned back through Lincoln's Inn Fields and passed down to Fleet Street. It was approaching twelve o'clock by this time, and streams of people were flowing in the direction of St. Paul's Cathedral. Glory turned eastward also, and allowed herself to be carried along with the current which babbled and talked like a river in the night.

Immediately in front of her there was a line of girls walking arm-in-arm across the width of the pavement. They were factory girls in big hats with ostrich feathers, and as they skipped along with their free step they sang snatches of Salvation hymns and music-hall songs. All at once they gave a shrill peal of laughter, and one of them cried, "Tell me what it is and I'll give it a nyme." At the next moment a strange figure was forging past their line, going westward with long strides. It was a man in the habit of a monk, with long black cassock and broad-brimmed hat. Glory caught a glimpse of his face as he passed her. It was a hungry, eager face, with big melancholy eyes, and it seemed to her that she must have seen it before somewhere. The wind was very cold and the great cross on the dome of the Cathedral stood out like a beacon against flying clouds.

St. Paul's Churchyard was thronged with noisy, happy people, and down to the last minute before the hour they shouted and joked and laughed. Then there was a hush, the great crowds seemed to hold their breath as if they had been a single living creature, and every face was turned upwards to the clock. The clock struck, the bells of the Cathedral began to ring, the people cheered and saluted each other and shook hands on every side, and then the dense mass broke up.

Glory could have cried for joy of it all—it was so simple, so human, so childlike. But she listened to the laughter and salutations of the people about her and felt "more lonely than the Bedouin in the desert;" she remembered the bubbling hopes that had carried her through the day, and her heart fell low; she thought of the letter which she had posted home on her way to the theatre, and two great tears came rolling from her eyes.

The face of the monk tormented her, and suddenly she bethought herself whose face it must have been. It must have been the face of Polly Love's brother. He belonged to the Bishopsgate Fathers, and had once been a patient in the hospital, and perhaps he was going there now on some errand or urgent message—to the doctors or to——

"It was foolish not to leave my address when the porter asked me," she thought. She would go back and do so. There could be no harm in that; and if anything had really happened, if John——

"Happy New Year to you, my dear!"

Somebody in the drifting crowd was standing before her and blocking the way. It was Agatha Jones in a mock sealskin coat and big black hat surmounted by black feathers, and with Charlie Wilkes (with his diminutive cap pushed back from his oily fringe and pimpled forehead) leaning heavily on her arm.

"Well, I never! Who'd have thought of meeting you in St. Paul's Churchyawd!"

Glory tried to laugh and to return the salutation over the noises of the people and the clangour of the bells. And then Aggie put her face close, as women do who are accustomed to talking in the street, and said, "Thought we'd seen the lahst of you, my dear, when you went off

that night sudden. Selling programmes somewhere else now?"

"Something of that sort," said Glory.

"I'm not. I've left the old red church this fortnight and more. Charlie's got me on the clubs. But my word!" turning to Charlie, "it's her as oughter be there, my dear!"

"She cheeks me out," said Charlie, "as you'll knock the stuffing out of Betty Bellman 'erself if you once myke a stawt."

And Aggie said, "I might get you to do a turn almost any Sunday if you like, my dear. There's always somebody as downt come, and they're glad of an extra turn to tyke the number, if she's only clever enough to get a few 'ands. Going 'ome, dear?"

"Yes," said Glory.

"Where d'ye live?" said Aggie, and Glory told her.

"I'll call for you Sunday night at eight, and if you downt tyke your chawnce when you get it, you're a foolisher woman than I thought you were, that's str'ight! Bye-bye!"

XII.

Always at half-past five in the morning the Father Superior began to awaken the Brotherhood. It took him a quarter of an hour to pass through the house on that errand, for the infirmities of his years were upon him. During this interval John Storm had intended to open the gate to Paul and then return the key to its place in the Father's room. The time was short, and, to lose no part of it, he had resolved to remain awake the whole night through.

There was little need to make a call on that resolution. With fear and remorse he could not close his eyes, and from hour to hour he heard every sound of the streets.

At one o'clock the voices singing outside were strained and cracked and out of tune; at two, they were brutish and drunken, and mingled with shrieks of quarrelling; at three, there was silence; at four, the butchers' waggons were rattling on the stones from the shambles across the river to the meat markets of London, with the carcasses of the thousands of beasts that were slaughtered overnight to feed the body of the monster on the morrow; and at five, the postal vans were galloping from the railway stations to the post-office with the millions of letters that were to feed its mind.

At half-past five the Father had come out of his room and passed slowly upstairs, and John Storm was in the courtyard opening the lock of the outer gate. Although there was a feeling of morning in the freezing air, it was still quite dark.

"Paul," he whispered, but there was no answer.

"Brother Paul!" he whispered again, and then waited, but there was no reply.

It was not at first that he realised the tremendous gravity of what had occurred—that Brother Paul had not returned, and that he must go back to the house without him. He kept calling into the darkness until he remembered that the Father would be down in his room again soon, and looking for the key where he had left it.

Back in the hall, he reproached himself with his haste, and concluded to return to the gate. There would be time to do it; the Father was still far overhead; his "Benedicamus Domino" was passing from corridor to corridor, and Paul might be coming down the street.

"Paul! Paul!" he cried again, and opening the gate he looked out. But there was no one on the pavement

except a drunken man and a girl, singing themselves home in the dead waste of the New Year's morning.

Then the truth fell on him like a thunder-clap, and he hurried back to the house for good. By this time the Father was coming down the stairs, and had reached the landing of the first storey. Snatching up from the bed in the alcove the book which had been lying there all night unregarded, he crept into the Father's room. He was coming out of it when he came face to face with the Father himself, who was on the point of going in.

"I have been returning the book you lent me," he said, and then he tried to steal away in his shame. But the Father held him awhile with playful remonstrance. The hours were not all saved that were stolen from the night, and his swelled eyes this morning were a testimony to the musty old maxim. Still, with a book like that, his diligence was not to be wondered at, and it would be interesting to hear what he thought of it. He couldn't say as yet? That wasn't to be wondered at either. Somebody had said that a great book was like a great mountain—not to be seen to the top while you were still too near to it.

John's duplicity was choking him. His eyes were averted from the Father's face, for he had lost the power of looking straight at anyone, and he could see the key of the gate still shaking from the hook on which his nervous fingers had placed it. When he escaped at length, the Father asked him to ring the bell for Lauds, as Brother Andrew, whose duty it was, had evidently overslept himself.

John rang the bell, and then took his lamp and some tapers from a shelf in the hall, and went out to the church to light the candles, for that also was Brother Andrew's duty. As he was crossing the courtyard on his way back

to the house, he passed the Father going to open the gate.

"But what has become of your hat?" said the Father, and then, for the first time, John remembered what he had done with it.

"I've lent—that is to say, I've lost it," he answered, and then stood with his eyes on the ground, while the Father reproved him for heedlessness of health and so forth.

It is part of the perversity of circumstance that, while an incident of the greatest gravity is occurring, its ridiculous counterpart is usually taking place by the side of it. When the religious had gathered in the church, it was seen that three of the stalls were vacant—Brother Paul's, Brother Andrew's, and the Father Minister's. The service had hardly begun when the bell was heard to ring again, and with a louder clangour than before, whereupon the religious concluded that Brother Andrew had awakened from his sleep, and was remembering with remorse his belated duty.

But it was the Father Minister. That silent and severe person had oftentimes rebuked the lay brother for his sleepiness, and this morning he had himself been overcome by the same infirmity. Awakening suddenly a little after six by the watch that hung by his bed, he had thought, "That lazy fellow is late again—I'll teach him a lesson." Leaping to his feet (the monk sleeps in his habit), he had hastened to the bell and rung it furiously, and then snatched up a taper and hurried down the stairs to light the candles in the church. When he appeared at the sacristy door with a lighted taper in his hand and confusion on his face, the brothers understood everything at a glance, and not even the solemnity of the service could smother the snufflings of their laughter.

The incident was a trivial one, but it diverted atten-

tion for a time from the fact of Paul's absence; and when the religious went back to the house and found Brother Andrew returned to his old duty as doorkeeper, the laughter was renewed and there was some playful banter.

The monk is so far a child that the least thing happening in the morning is enough to determine the temper of the day, and as late as the hour for breakfast the house was still rippling with the humour of the Father Minister's misadventure. There was one seat vacant in the refectory—Brother Paul's—and the Superior was the first to observe it. With a twinkle in his eye, he said—

"I feel like Boy Blue this morning. Two of my stray sheep have come home, bringing their tails behind them. Will anybody go in search of the third?"

John Storm rose immediately, but a lay brother was before him, so he sat down again with his white cheeks and quivering lips, and made an effort to eat his breakfast.

The reader for the week recited the Scripture for the day, and then took up the book which the brothers were hearing at their meals. It was the "Life and Death of Father Ignatius of St. Paul," and the chapter they had come to dealt with certain amusing examples of vanities and foibles. An evil spirit might have selected it with special reference to the incidents of the morning, for at every fresh illustration the Father Minister squirmed on his seat, and the brothers looked across at him, and laughed with a spice of mischief, and even a touch of malice.

John's eyes were on the door and his heart was quivering, but the messenger did not return during breakfast; and when it was over the Superior rose without waiting for him, and led the way to the community-room.

A fire was burning in the wide grate, and the room was cheerful with reflected sun-rays, for the sun was shin-

ing in the courtyard and glistening on the frosty boughs of the sycamore. It was a beautiful New Year's morning, and the Father began to tell some timely stories. In the midst of the laughter that greeted them the lay brother returned and delivered his message: Brother Paul could not be found, and there was not a sign of him anywhere in the house.

"That's strange!" said the religious.

"Perhaps he is in his cell," said the Father.

"No, he is not there," said the messenger; "and his bed has not been slept in."

"Now, that explains something," said the Father. "I thought he didn't answer when I knocked at his door in the morning; but my ears grow dull and my eyes are failing me, and I told myself perhaps——"

"It's very strange!" said the religious, with looks of astonishment.

"But perhaps he stayed all night at his penance in the church," said the Father.

"Apparently his hat did so, at all events," said one of the brothers. "I saw it lying with his lamp on the stall in front of me."

There was silence for a moment, and then the Father said, with a smile—

"But my children are so amusing in such matters. Only this morning I had to reprove Brother Storm for losing his hat somewhere, and now Brother Paul——"

By an involuntary impulse, obscure to themselves, the brothers turned towards John, who was standing in the recess of one of the windows, with his pale face looking out on the sunshine.

John was the first to speak.

"Father," he said, "I have something to say to you."

"Come this way," said the Superior, and they passed out of the room together.

The Father led the way to his room and closed the door behind them. But there was little need for confession; the Father seemed to know everything in an instant. He sat in his wicker chair before the fire and rocked himself and moaned.

"Well, well, God's wrath comes up against the children of disobedience, but we must do our best to bear our punishment."

John Storm made no excuses. He had stood by the Father's chair and told his story simply, without fear or remorse, only concealing that part of it which concerned himself in relation to Glory.

"Yes, yes," said the Father, "I see quite plainly how it has been. He was like tinder, ready to take fire at a spark, and you were thinking I had been hard and cruel and inhuman."

It was the truth; John could not deny it; he held down his head and was silent.

"But shall I tell you why I refused that poor boy's petition? Shall I tell you who he was and how he came to be here? Yes, I will tell you. Nobody in this house has heard it until now, because it was his secret and mine and God's alone—not given me in confession, no, or it would have to be locked in my breast for ever. But you have thrust yourself in between us, so you must hear everything, and may the Lord pity and forgive you and help you to bear your burden."

John felt that a cold damp was breaking out on his forehead, but he clenched his moist hands and made ready to control himself.

"Has he ever spoken of another sister?"

"Yes, he has sometimes mentioned her."

"Then perhaps you have been told of the painful and tragic event that happened?"

"No," said John; but something that he had heard at the Board meeting at the hospital returned at that moment with a stunning force to his memory.

"His father, poor man, was one of my own people—one of the lay associates of our Society in the world outside. But his health gave way, his business failed him, and he died in a mad-house, leaving his three children to the care of a friend. The friend was thought to be a worthy and even a pious man, but he was a scoundrel and a traitor. The younger sister—the one you know—he committed to an orphanage, the elder one he deceived and ruined. As a sequel to his sin she lived a life of shame on the streets of London, and died by suicide at the end of it."

John Storm put up one hand to his head as if his brain was bursting, and with the other hand he held on to the Father's chair.

"That was bad enough, but there was worse to follow. Our poor Paul had grown to be a man by this time, and Satan put it into his heart to avenge his sister's dishonour. 'As the whirlwind passeth, so the wicked are no more.' The betrayer of his trust was found dead in his room, slain by an unknown assassin. Brother Paul had killed him."

John Storm had fallen to his knees. If hell itself had opened at his feet he could not have been stricken with more horror. In a voice strangled by fear he stammered, "But why didn't you tell me this before? Why have you hidden it until now?"

"Passions, my son, are the same in a monastery as

outside of it, and I had too much reason to fear that the saintliest soul in our Brotherhood would have refused to live and eat and sleep in the same house with a murderer. But the poor soul had come to me like a hunted beast, and who was I that I should turn my back upon him? Before that he had tramped through the streets and slept in the parks, under the impression that the police were pursuing him, and thereby he contracted the lung disease from which he suffers still. What was I to do? Give him up to the law? Who shall tell me how I could have held the balance level? I took him into my house; I sheltered him; I made him a member of our community; Heaven forgive me, I suffered myself to receive his vows. It was for me to comfort his stricken body, for the Church to heal his wounded soul; and as for his crime, that was in God's hands, and God alone could deal with it."

The Father had risen to his feet, and he spoke the last words with uplifted hand.

"Now you know why I refused that poor boy's petition. I loved him as a son, but neither the disease of his body nor the weakness of his mind could break the firmness of the rule by which I held him. I knew that Satan was dragging him away from me, and I would not give him up to the sufferings and dangers which the Evil One was preparing for him in the world. But how subtle are the temptations of the devil! He found the weak place in my armour at last. He found you, my son—you; and he tempted you by all your love, by all your pity, by all your tenderness, and you fell, and this is the consequence."

The Father clasped his hands at his breast and walked to and fro in the little room.

"The bitterness of the world against religious houses

is great already, but if anything should happen now, if a crime should be committed, if our poor brother, clad in the habit of our Order——"

He stopped and crossed himself and lifted his eyes, and said in a tremulous whisper, 'O God, whom have I in heaven but Thee? My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.'"

John had staggered to his feet like a drunken man. "Father," he said, "send me away from you. I am not fit to live by your side."

The father laid both hands on his shoulders. "And shall I lower my flag to the enemy like that? There is only one way to defeat the devil, and that is to defy him. No, no, my son; you shall remain with me to the last."

"Punish me, then. Give me penance. Let me be the lowest of the low and the meanest of the mean. Only tell me what I am to do and I will do it."

"Go back to the door and resume your duty as door-keeper."

John looked at the Father with an expression of bewilderment.

"I thought you had done with it, my son, but Heaven knew better. And promise that when you are there you will pray for our wandering brother, that he may not be allowed to fulfil the errand on which you sent him out; pray that he may never find his sister, or anybody who knows her and can tell him where she is and what has become of her; pray that she may never cross his path to the last hour of life and the first of death's sundering; promise to pray for this, my son, night and day, morning and evening, with all your soul and strength, as you would pray for God's mercy and your soul's salvation."

John did not answer; he was like a man in a stupor. "Is it possible?" he said. "Are you sending me back to the door? Can you trust me again?"

The Father stepped to the side of the bed and took the key of the gate from its place under the shelf. "Take this key with you too, because for the future you are to be the keeper of the gate as well."

John had taken the key mechanically, hardly hearing what was being said.

"Is it true, then?—have you got faith in me still?"

The Father put both hands on his shoulders again and looked into his face. "God has faith in you, my child, and who am I that I should despair?"

When John Storm returned to the door, his mind was in a state of stupefaction. Many hours passed during which he was only partly conscious of what was taking place about him. Sometimes he was aware that certain of the brothers had gathered around, with a tingling, electrical atmosphere among them, and that they were asking questions about the escape, and whispering together as if it had been something courageous and almost commendable, and had set their hearts beating. Again, sometimes he was aware that big Brother Andrew was sitting by his side on the form, stroking his arm from time to time, and talking in his low voice and aimless way about his mother and the last he saw of her. "She followed me down the street crying," he said, "and I have often thought of it since and been tempted to run away." Also he was aware that the dog was with him always, licking the backs of his stiff hands and poking up a cold muzzle into his downcast face.

All this time he was doing his duties automatically, and apparently without help from his consciousness, open-

ing and closing the door as the brothers passed in and out on their errand to the dead and dying, and saying "Praise be to God!" when a stranger knocked. It may be that his body was merely answering to the habits of his intellect, and that his soul, which had sustained a terrible blow, was lying stunned and swooning within.

When it revived and he began to know and to feel once more, there was no one with him, for the brothers were asleep in their beds, and the dog was in the court-yard and the house was very quiet, for it was the middle of the night. And then it came back to him, like a dream remembered in the morning, that the Father had asked him to pray for Brother Paul that he might fail in the errand on which he had sent him out into the world, and though with his lips he had not promised, yet in his heart he had undertaken to do so.

And being quite alone now, with no one but God for company, he went down on his knees in his place by the door and clasped his hands together.

"O God," he prayed, have pity on Paul, and on me, and on all of us! Keep him from all danger and suffering, and from the snares and assaults of the Evil One. Grant that he may never find his sister—or anybody who knows her—or anybody who can tell him where she is and what has become of her . . ."

But having got so far he could get no further, for suddenly it occurred to him that this was a prayer which concerned Glory and himself as well. It was only then that he realised the magnitude and awfulness of the task he had undertaken. He had undertaken to ask God that Paul might not find Glory either, and therefore that he on his part might never hear of her again. When he put it

to himself like that, the sweat started from his forehead and he was transfixed with fear.

He rose from his knees and sat on the form, and for a long hour he laboured in the thought of a thousand possibilities, telling himself of the many things which might befall a beautiful girl in a cruel and wicked city. But then again he thought of Paul, and his former crime and present temptation, and remembered the shadow that hung over the Brotherhood.

"O God, help me," he cried; "strengthen me, support me, guide me!"

He tried to frame another prayer, but the words would not come; he tried to kneel as before, but his knees would not bend. How could he pray that Glory also might be lost—that something might have happened to her—that somewhere and some way unknown to him——?

No, no, a thousand times no! The prayer was impossible. Let come what would, let the danger to Paul and to the Brotherhood be what it might, let Satan and all his legions fall on him, yet he could not and would not utter it.

XIII.

THE stars were paling, but the day had not yet dawned when there came a knock at the door. John started and listened. After an interval the knock was repeated. It was a timid, hesitating tap, as if made with the tips of the fingers low down on the door.

"Praise be to God!" said John, and he drew the slide of the grating. He had expected to see a face outside, but there was nothing there.

"Who is it?" he asked, and there came no answer.

He took up the lamp that was kept burning in the

hall and looked out through the bars. There was nothing in the darkness but an icy mist which appeared to be rising from the ground.

"Only another of my dreams," he thought, and he laid his hand on the slide to close it.

Then he heard a sigh that seemed to rise out of the ground, and at the same moment the dog uttered a deep bay. He laid hold of the door and pulled it quickly open. At his feet the figure of a man was kneeling, bent double and huddled up.

"Paul!" he cried in an excited whisper.

Brother Paul raised his head. His face was frightfully changed. It was grey and wasted. His eyes wandered, his lips trembled, and he looked like a man who had been flogged.

"Good Lord! what a wreck!" thought John. He helped him to rise and enter. The poor creature's limbs were stiff with cold, and he stumbled from weakness as he crossed the threshold.

"But, thank God, you are back, and no harm done!" said John. "How anxious we've been! You must never go out again—never! There, brother, sit there."

The wandering eyes looked up with a supplicating expression. "Forgive me, Brother Storm——"

But John would not listen. "Hush, brother! what have I to forgive? How cold you are! Your hands are like ice. What can I do? There's no fire in the house at this time of night—even in the kitchen it will be out now. But wait; I can rub you with my hands. See, I'm warm and strong. There's a deal of blood in me yet. That's better, isn't it? Tingling, eh? That's right—that's good! Now for your feet—your feet will be colder still."

"No, brother, no. I ought to be kissing the feet of everybody in the house and asking the prayers of the community, and yet you——"

"Tut! what nonsense! Let me take off this shoe. Dear me! how it sticks! Why, you've worn it through and through. Look! What a mercy the snow was hard! If there had been thaw, now! How far you must have walked!"

"Yes, I've wandered a long way, brother."

"You shall tell me all about it. I want to hear everything—every single thing."

"There's nothing to tell. I've failed in my errand, that's all."

John, who was on his knees, drew back and looked up. "Do you mean, then . . . Have you not seen your sister?"

"No, she's gone, and nobody knows anything about her."

"Well, perhaps it's for the best, brother. God's will be done, you know. If you had found her—who knows? —you might have been tempted . . . But tell me everything."

"I cannot do that, I'm so weak, and it's not worth while."

"But I want to hear all that happened. See, your feet are all right now—I've rubbed them warm again. Though I fast so much and look so thin, I've a deal of life in me. And I've been pouring it all into you, haven't I? That's because I want you to revive and be strong and tell me everything. Hush! Speak low; don't waken anybody! Did you find the hospital?"

"Yes."

"Then Nurse Quayle sees nothing of your sister now! That's the pity of the life she is leading, poor girl! No friends, no future——"

"It wasn't that, brother."

"What then?"

"The nurse was not there."

A silence followed, and then John said in another voice, "I suppose she was on holiday. It was very stupid of me; I didn't think of that. Twice a year a hospital nurse is entitled to a week's holiday, and no doubt——"

"But she was gone."

"Gone? You mean left the hospital?"

"Yes."

"Well," in a husky voice, "that isn't to be wondered at either. A high-spirited girl finds it hard to be bound down to rule and regulation. But the porter—he is an intelligent man—he would tell you where she had gone to."

"I asked him; he didn't know. All he could say was that she left the hospital on the morning of the Lord Mayor's Show-day."

"That would be the 9th of November—the day we took our vows."

There was another pause. The big dark eyes were wandering vacantly.

"After all, he is only a porter. You asked for the matron, didn't you?"

"Yes; I thought she might know what had become of my sister. But she didn't. As for Nurse Quayle, she had been dismissed also, and nobody knew anything about her."

John had seated himself at Paul's side, and the form itself was quivering.

"Now that's just like her," he said hoarsely. "That matron was always a hard woman. And to think that in that great house of love and pity nobody——"

"I am forgetting something, brother."

"What is it?"

"The porter told me that the nurse called for her

letters from time to time. She had been there that night —not half an hour before."

"Then you followed her, didn't you? You asked which way she had gone, and you hurried after her?"

"Yes; but half-an-hour in London is a week anywhere else. Let anybody cross the street and he is lost—more lost to sight than a ship in a storm on the ocean. And then it was New Year's Eve, and the thoroughfares were crowded, and thousands of women were coming and going —and . . . What could I do?" he said helplessly.

John answered scornfully, "What could you do? Do you ask me what you could do?"

"What would you have done?"

"I should have tramped every street in London and looked into the face of every woman I met until I had found her. I should have worn my shoes to the welt and my skin to the bone before I would have come crawling home like a snail with my shell broken over my head."

"Don't be hard on me, brother, least of all now, when I have come home, like a snail, as you say, with my shell broken. I was very tired and ill, and did all I could. If I had been strong like you, and brave-hearted, I might have struggled longer. But I *did* tramp the streets and look into the women's faces. She must have been among them, if she's living the life you speak of, but God would not let me find her. Why was it that my search was fruitless? Perhaps there was evil in my heart at first—I don't mind telling you that now—but I swear to you by Him who died for us that at last I only wanted to find my sister, that I might save her. But I am such a helpless creature, and . . ."

John put his arm about Paul's shoulders.

"Forgive me, brother. I was mad to talk to you like

that—I who sent you out on that cruel night and stayed at home myself. You did what you could . . ."

"You think that—really?"

"Yes, only at the moment it seemed as if we had changed places somehow, and it was I who had lost a sister and been out to find her, and given up the search too soon, and come home empty and useless and broken-spirited and . . ."

Paul was looking up at him with a face full of astonishment.

"Do you really think I did all I could to find her—the nurse, I mean?"

But John had turned his own face away, and there was no answer. Paul tried to say something, but he could not find the words. At last in a choked voice he murmured, "We must keep close together, brother; we are in the same boat now."

And feeling for John's hand, he took it and held it, and they sat some minutes with bowed heads, as if a ghost were going by.

"There's nothing but prayer and penance and fasting left to us, is there?"

Still John made no reply, and the broken creature began to comfort him.

"We have peace here, at all events, and you wouldn't think what temptations come to you in the world when you've lost somebody, and there seems to be nothing left to live for. Shall I tell you what I did? It was in the early morning and I was standing in a doorway in Piccadilly. The cabs and the crowds were gone, and only the nightmen were swilling up the dirt of the pavements with their hose-pipes and water. 'My poor girl is lost,' I thought. 'We shall never see one another again. This

wicked city has ruined her, and our mother, who was so holy, was fond of her when she was a little child." And then my heart seemed to freeze up within me . . . and I did it. You'll think I was mad—I went to the police station and told them I had committed a crime. Yes, indeed, I accused myself of murder and began to give particulars. It was only when they noticed my habit that I remembered the Father, and then I refused to answer any more questions. They put me in a cell, and that was where I spent the night, and next morning I denied everything and they let me go."

Then, dropping his voice to a hoarse whisper, he said, "That wasn't what brought me back, though. It was the vow. You can't think what a thing the vow is until you've broken it. It's like a hot iron searing your very soul, and if you were dying and at the farthest ends of the earth, and you had to crawl on your hands and knees, you would come back . . ."

He would have said more, but an attack of coughing silenced him, and when it was over there was a sound of someone moving in the house.

"What is that?"

"It is the Father," said John. "Our voices have wakened him."

Paul struggled to his feet.

"It's only a life of penance and suffering you've come back to, my poor lad."

"That's nothing—nothing at all . . . But are you sure you think I did everything?"

"You did what you could. Are you going somewhere?"

"Yes, to the Father."

"God bless you, my lad!"

"And God bless you too, brother!"

Half-an-hour later, by order of the Superior, John Storm, with the help of Brother Andrew and the Father Minister, carried Brother Paul to his cell. The bell had been rung for Lauds, and going up the stairs they passed the brothers coming down to service. News of Paul's return had gone through the house like a cutting wind, and certain of the brothers who had gathered in groups on the landings were whispering together, as if the coming back had been a shameful thing which cast discredit on all of them. It wasn't love of rule that had brought the man home again, but broken health and the want of a bed to die upon! Thus they talked under their breath, unconscious of the secret operation of their own hearts. In a monastery, as elsewhere, failure is the worst disgrace.

John Storm returned to the hall with a firm step and eyes full of resolution. Hardly answering the brothers, who plied him with questions, he pushed through them with long strides, and taking the key of the outer gate from the place in the alcove where he had left it, he turned towards the Father's room.

The day had dawned, and through the darkness which was lifting in the little room he could see the Father rising from his knees.

"Father!" he cried in an excited voice, and his words, like his breath, came in gusts.

"What is it, my son?"

"Take this key back again. The world is calling me, and I cannot trust myself at the door any longer. Put me under the rule of silence and solitude and shut me up in a cell, or I shall break my obedience and run away as sure as heaven is over us!"

XIV.

GLORY awoke on New Year's morning with a little hard lump at her heart and thought, "How foolish! Am I to give up all my cherished dreams because one man is a scoundrel?"

The struggle might be bitter, but she would not give in. London was the mother of genius. If she destroyed, she created also. It was only the weak and the worthless she cast away. The strong she made stronger, the great she made greater. "O God, give me the life I love!" she thought; "give me a chance; only let me begin—no matter how, no matter where!"

She remembered her impulse of the night before to follow Brother Paul, and the little hard lump at her heart grew bitter. John Storm had gone from her, forgotten her, left her to take care of herself. Very well, so be it! What was the use of thinking? "I hate to be sentimental," she thought.

If Aggie called on Sunday night she would go with her, no matter if it was beginning at the bottom. Others had begun there, and what right had she to expect to begin anywhere else? For the future she would take the world on its own terms and force it to give way. She would conquer this great cruel London and yet remain a good girl in spite of all.

Such was the mood in which she came down to breakfast, and the first thing that met her eyes was a letter from home. At that her face burned for a moment and her breath came in gusts, but she put the letter into her pocket unopened and tossed her head a little and laughed. "I hate to be so sensitive," she thought, and then she began to tell Mrs. Jupe what she intended to do.

"The clubs!" cried Mrs. Jupe. "I thought you didn't tyke to the shop because you fancied yerself above present company. But the foreign clubs! My gracious!"

The hissing of Mrs. Jupe's taunting voice followed her about all that day, and late at night, when they were going to bed and the streets were quiet, and there was only the jingle of a passing hansom or a drunken shout or the screech of a concertina, she could hear it again from the other side of the plaster partition, interrupted occasionally by the sound of Mr. Jupe's attempts to excuse and apologise for her. No matter! Anything to escape from the atmosphere of that woman's house, to be free of her and quit of her for ever.

Towards eight o'clock on Sunday evening she went up to her bedroom to put on her hat and ulster, and being alone there, and waiting for Aggie, she could not help but open her letter from home.

"Sunday next is your birthday, my dear one," wrote the Parson, "so we send you our love and greetings. This being the first of your twenty-one that you have spent from home, I will be thinking of you all the day through, and when night comes, and I smoke a pipe by the study fire, I know I shall be leaving the blind up that I may see the evening star and remember the happy birthdays long ago, when somebody who was so petted and spoiled used to say she had just come down from it, having dressed herself in some strange and grand disguises, and told us she was Phonodoree the fairy. You will be better employed than that, Glory, and as long as my dear one is well and happy and prosperous in the great city where she so loves to be——"

The candle was shaking in Glory's hands, and the little half-lit bedroom seemed to be blinking in and out.

Aunt Anna had added a postscript: "Glad to hear you are enjoying yourself in London, but rather alarmed at your frequent mention of theatres. Take care you don't go too often, child, and mind you send us the name of the vicar of the parish you are living in, for I certainly think grandfather ought to write to him."

"To this again there was a footnote by Aunt Rachel: "You say nothing of Mr. Drake nowadays. Is he one of Mrs. Jupe's visitors? And is it he who takes you to the theatre?"

Then there was a New Year's card enclosed, having a picture of an Eastern shepherd at the head of his flock of sheep, and bearing the inscription, "Follow in his footsteps."

But the hissing sound of Mrs. Jupe's voice came up from below, and Glory's tears were dried in an instant. On going downstairs, she found Aggie in her mock sealskin and big black feathers sitting in the parlour at the back of the shop, and Mrs. Jupe talking to her in whispers, with an appearance of knowledge and familiarity. She caught the confused look of the one and the stealthy glances of the other, and the hard lump at her heart grew harder.

"Come on," said Glory, and a few minutes afterwards the girls were walking towards Soho. The little chapels in the quieter streets were dropping out their driblets of people and the lights in the church windows were being extinguished one by one. Aggie had recovered her composure, and was talking of Charlie as she skipped along with a rapid step, swinging her stage-box by her side. Charlie was certain to be at one of the clubs, and he would be sure to see them home. He wasn't out of his time yet, and that was why her father wouldn't allow him

about. But he was in an office at a foundry, and his people lived in a house, and perhaps one of these days——"

"Did you say that some of the people who are on the stage now began at the clubs?" said Glory.

"Plenty, my dear. There's Betty Bellman for one. She was at a club in Old Compton Street when Mr. Sefton found her out.

Aggie had to "work a turn" at each of three clubs that night, and the girls were now at the door of the first of them. It stood at the corner of a reputable square, and was like any ordinary house on the outside. But people were coming and going constantly, and the door-keeper was kept opening and closing the door. In the middle of the hall a clerk stood at a desk, having a great book in front of him, and making a show of challenging everybody as he entered. He recognised Aggie as an artiste, but passed Glory also on the payment of twopence and the signing of her name in the book.

The dining-room of the house had been converted into a bar, with counter and stillage, and after the girls had crushed through the crowds that stood there they came into a large and shabby chamber, which had the appearance of having been built over the space which had once been the backyard. This room had neither windows nor skylights; its walls were decorated with portraits of Garibaldi and Victor Emanuel in faded colours, and there was a stage and proscenium at its farther end.

It was an Italian club that met there on Sunday nights, and some two or three hundred hairdressers and restaurant-keepers of swarthy complexion sat in groups at little round tables with their wives and sweethearts (chiefly Englishwomen), smoking and drinking and laughing at the performance on the stage.

Aggie went down to her dressing-room under the floor, and Glory sat at a table with a yellow-haired lady and a dark-eyed man. A negro without the burnt cork was twanging a banjo and cracking the jokes of the corner-man.

"That's my style—a merry touch-and-go," said the lady. And then, glancing at Glory, "Singing to-night, my dear?"

Glory shook her head.

"Thort you might be a pro' p'rhaps. Use ter be myself when I was in the bally at the Lane. Married now, my dear; but I likes to come of a Sunday night when the kids is got to bed."

Then Aggie danced a skirt-dance, and there were shouts of applause for her, and she came back and danced again. When she reappeared in jacket and hat, and with her stage-box in her hand, the girls crushed their way out. Going through the bar they were invited to drink by several of the men who were standing there, but they got into the street at last.

"They're rather messy, those bars," said Aggie; "but managers like you to come round and tyke something after you've done your turn—if it's only a cup of cawfy."

"Do you like this life?" said Glory, taking a long breath.

"Yes, awfully!" said Aggie.

Their next visit was to a Swiss club, which did not greatly differ from the Italian one, except that the hall was more shabby, and that the audience consisted of French and Swiss waiters and skittish young English milliners. The girls had taken their hats and cloaks off and sat dressed like dolls in white muslin with long streamers of bright ribbon. A gentleman sang the "Postman's Knock," with the character accompaniment of a pot-hat

and a black-edged envelope; a lady sang "Maud" in silk tights and a cloak; Aggie danced her skirt-dance, and then the floor was cleared for a ball.

"They're going to dance the Swiss dance," said Aggie, "and the M.C. wants me to tyke a place; but I hate these fellows to be hugging me. Will you be my partner, dear?"

"Well, just for a minute or two," said Glory with nervous gaiety. And then the dance began.

It proved to be a musical version of "odd man out," and Glory soon found herself being snapped up by other partners and addressed familiarly by the waiters and their women. She could feel the moisture of their hands and smell the oil of their hair, and a feeling like a spasm of physical pain came over her.

"Let us go," she whispered.

"Yes, it's getting lyte," said Aggie, and they pressed through the crowded bar and out into the street.

The twanging of the fiddles, the thud of the dancing, and the peals of coarse laughter followed them from the stifling atmosphere within, and Glory felt sick and faint.

"Do you say that managers of good places call at these clubs sometimes?"

"Often," said Aggie; and she hummed a music-hall tune as she skipped and tripped along.

The streets, which had been dark and quiet when they arrived in Soho, were now ablaze with lights in every window and noisy with people on every pavement. The last club they had to visit was a German one, and as they came near it they saw that a man was standing at the door bareheaded, and looking out for somebody.

"It's Charlie," said Aggie with a little jump of joy.

But when they came up to him a scowl darkened his dark face, and he said—

"Lyte as usual! Two of the bloomin' turns not come, and me looking up and dahn the bloomin' street for you every minute and more!"

The girl's eyes blinked as if he had struck her, but she only tossed her head and stiffened her under lip and said—

"Jawing again, are ye? I'd chuck it for once, Charlie, if it was only for sake of company."

With that she disappeared to the dressing-room, and Charlie took charge of Glory, pushed a way for her through the refreshment-room, offered her a "glaws of somethink," and, with an obvious pride of possession, introduced her to admiring acquaintances as "a friend o' mine." "Like yer style, Charlie," said some of them. "Oh, yus! Daresay!" said Charlie.

The proscenium was surmounted by the German and English flags intertwined, the walls were adorned with oleograph portraits of the Kaiser, his father and grandfather, Bismarck and Von Moltke, and the audience consisted largely of lively young German Jews and Jewesses in evening dress, some Polish Jews, and a sprinkling of other foreigners.

During Aggie's turn Glory was conscious that two strangers out of another world altogether had entered the club and were standing at the back.

"Toffs," said Charlie, looking at them over her shoulder, and then, answering to himself the meaning of their looks, "No, my luds! 'Tain't the first we've seen of sech!"

Then Aggie came up with an oily person in a flowered waistcoat and said—

"This is my friend, guv'nor; and she wouldn't mind doing a turn if you asked her."

"If de miss vill oblige," began the oily one; and then the blood rushed to Glory's face, and before she knew what else had happened, her hat and ulster were in Aggie's hands, and she was walking up the steps to the stage.

There was some applause when she went on, but she was in a dazed condition, and it all seemed to be taking place a hundred miles away. She heard her own voice saying, "Ladies and gentlemen, with your kind permission I will endeavour to give you an imitation . . ." and something more. Down to that moment her breath had been coming and going in hot gasps, and she had felt a dryness in the throat; but every symptom of nervousness suddenly disappeared, and she threw up her head like a charger in battle.

Then she sang. It was only a common street song, and everybody had heard it a thousand times. She sang, "And her golden hair was hanging down her back," after the manner of a line of factory girls going home from work at night. Arm in arm, decked in their Vandyke hats, slashed with red ribbon and crowned with ostrich feathers, with their free step, their shrill voices—they were there before everybody's eyes; everybody could see them, everybody could recognise them, and before the end of the first verse there were shouts and squeals of laughter.

Glory felt dizzy yet self-possessed; she gave a little audible laugh while she stood bowing between the verses. In a few minutes the song was finished, and the people were stamping, whistling, uttering screeching cat-calls, and shouting "Brayvo." But Glory was sitting at the foot of the stage by this time, with a face contorted as

in physical pain. After the first thrill of success, the shame of it all came over her, and she saw how low she had fallen, and felt horrified and afraid. The clamour, the clapping of hands, the vulgar faces, the vulgar laughter, the vulgar song, Sunday night, her own birthday! It all passed before her like the incidents in some nightmare, and at the back of it came other memories—Glenfaba, the sweet and simple household, the old Parson smoking by the study fire and looking up at the evening star, and then John Storm and the church chimes at Bishopsgate! One moment she sat there with her burning face, staring helplessly before her, while people crowded round to shake hands with her, and cried into her ears above the deafening tumult, "You'll have to tyke another turn, dear;" and then she burst into passionate weeping.

"Stand avay! De lady's not fit to sing again," said someone, and she opened her eyes.

It was one of the two gentlemen who had been standing at the back.

"Ach Gott! Is it you? Don't you know me, nurse?"

It was Mr. Koenig, the organist.

"My gracious! Vot are you doing here, my child? Two monts ago I haf ask for you at de hospital, and haf write to de matron, but you vere gone. Since den I haf look for you all over London. Vhere do you lif?"

Glory told him, and he wrote down the address.

"Ugh! A genius and lif in a tobacco-shop! My vife vill call on you and fetch you avay. She is a goot woman, and vhatever she tell you to do you must do it; but not musical and clever same like as you. Bless mine soul! Singing in a Sunday club! Do you know, my child, you haf a voice, and talents, great talents! Vants

training—yes. But vhat vould you haf? Here am I, Carl Koenig! I speak ver' bad de Englisch, but I know ver' goot to teach music. I vill teach you same like I teach oder ladies who pay me many dollare. Do you know vhat I am?"

Yes, she knew what he was—he was the organist at All Saints, Belgravia.

"Pooh! I am a composer as vell. I write songs, and all your countrymen and countryvomen sing dem. I haf a choral company, too, and it is for dat I vant you. I go to de first houses in de land, de lords, de ministers, de princes. You shall come vith me. Your voice is soprano —no, mezzo-soprano—and it vill grow. I vill pitch it, and vhen it is ready I vill bring you out. But now get away from dis place, and naivare come back, or I vill be more angry as before."

Then Glory rose and he led her to the door. Her heart felt big and her eyes were glistening. Aggie was in the refreshment-room. Having finished for the night, the girl had resumed her outdoor costume without removing her make-up, and was laughing merrily among a group of men, and playing them off against Charlie, who was still in the sulks and drinking at the bar. When Glory appeared Aggie fidgeted with her glove and said, "Aren't you going to see us home, Charlie?"

"No," said Charlie.

"Where are you going to?"

"Nowhere as you can come."

Aggie's eyes watered, and she wrenched a button off, but she only laughed and answered, "Don't think as we're throwing ourselves at *your* head, my man. We only wanted to *know*. Ta-ta!"

It was now midnight, and the streets were thin of

people, but sounds of music and dancing came from nearly every open window and door.

Aggie was crying. "That's the worst of the clubs," she said, "they lead 'em to the gambling hells. And then a young man always knows when he can tyke advantage."

As they returned past the Swiss club, somebody who was being thrown out into the street was shouting in a gurgling voice, "Let go o' my throat or I'll corpse ye!" And farther on two or three girls in their teens, with their arms about the necks of twice as many men, were reeling along the pavement and singing in a tuneless wail.

XV.

TOWARDS the middle of Lent the Society of the Holy Gethsemane was visited by its ecclesiastical Visitor. This was the Bishop of the diocese, a liberal-minded man, and not a very rigid ecclesiastic, abrupt, brusque, business-like, and a good administrator. When the brothers had gathered in the community-room, he took from the Superior the leather-bound volume containing the rule of the Brotherhood, and read aloud the text of it.

"And now, gentlemen," he said, "whether I approve of your rule or not is a matter with which we have no concern at present. My sole duty is to see that it is lawfully administered. Are you satisfied with the administration of it and willing to remain under its control?"

There was only one response from the brothers—they were entirely satisfied.

The Bishop rose with a smile and bowed to the brothers, and they began to leave the room.

"There are two of my people whom you have not yet seen," said the Father.

"Where are they?"

"In their cells."

"Why in their cells?"

"One of them is ill; the other is under the rule of silence and solitude."

"Let us visit them," said the Bishop, and they began to ascend the stairs.

"I may not agree with your theory of the religious life, Father, but when I see your people giving up the world and its comforts, its joys and possessions, its ties of blood and affection——"

They had reached the topmost storey, and the Father had paused to recover breath. "This cell to the right," said he, "is occupied by a lay brother who was tempted by the Evil One to a grievous act of disobedience, and the wrath of God has fallen on him. But Satan has overreached himself for once, and by that very act grace has triumphed. Not a member of our community rejoices more in the blessed sacrament, and when I place the body of our Lord——"

"May we go in to him?"

"Certainly; he is dying of lung disease, but you shall see with what patience he possesses his soul."

Brother Paul was sitting before a small fire in an armchair padded with pillows, holding in his dried-up hands a heavy crucifix which was suspended from his neck.

"How lightsome and cosy we are up here," said the Bishop. "A long way up, certainly, but no doubt you get everything you require."

"Everything," said Paul.

"I dare say the brothers are very good to you—they usually are so to the weak and ailing in a monastery."

"Too good, my lord."

"Of course you see a doctor occasionally?"

"Three times a week, and if he would only let me escape from an evil and troublesome world——"

"Hush! It's not right to talk like that, my son. Whatever happens, it is our duty to live, you know."

"I've lost all there was to live for, and besides——"

"Then there is nothing you wish for?" said the Bishop.

"Nothing but death," said Paul, and lifting the crucifix, he carried it to his lips.

"Thank God we are born to die," said the Bishop, and they stepped back to the corridor and closed the door.

"This next cell," said the Father, "is occupied by such a one as you were thinking of—one who was born to possess the world and to achieve its sounding triumphs, but——"

"Has he given it up entirely?"

"Entirely."

"Is he young?"

"Quite young, and he has left the world, not as Augustine did, after learning by bitter experience the deceitfulness of sin——"

"Then why is he here?"

"He cannot trust himself yet. He feels the inward strivings and struggles of our rebellious nature and——"

"Then his solitude and silence are voluntary?"

"Now they are. See," said the Father, and stooping to the floor he picked up a key that lay at his feet.

"What does that mean?"

"He locks himself in and pushes the key under the door."

When they entered the cell, John Storm was standing by the window in a stream of morning sunlight, looking out on the world below with fixed and yearning eyes.

"This is our Visitor," said the Father. "The rule of silence is relaxed in his case!"

"Have I not seen you before?" said the Bishop.

"I think not, Father," said John.

"What is your name and where did you live before you came here?"

John told him.

"Then I have both seen and heard you. But I perceive that the world has gone on a little since you left it—your Canon is an Archdeacon now and one of the chaplains to the Queen as well. How long have you been in the Brotherhood?"

"Since the 14th of August."

"And how long have you kept your cell?"

"Since the Octave of Epiphany."

"But this is Lent—rather a long penance, Father."

"I have often urged our dear brother . . ." began the Father.

"You carry your fastings and prayers too far, Mr. Storm," said the Bishop. He was picking up one by one some black-letter books that were lying on the table and on the bed. "I know that divines in all ages tell us that the body is evil, and that its desires and appetites must be eradicated; but they also teach us that the perfect Christian character is the blending of the two lives, the life of nature and the life of grace. Don't despise your humanity, my son. Your Master did not despise it. He came down from heaven that He might live and work among the sinful brotherhood of man. And don't pray for death, or fast as if you wished for it. You would have no right to do that even if you were like your poor neighbour next door, whom death smiles on and beckons to repose. But you are young and you are strong. Who knows what good work your Heavenly Father holds in store for you yet?"

John had returned to the window and was looking out with vacant eyes.

"But all this is beside my present business," said the Bishop. "There is nothing you wish to complain of?"

"Nothing whatever."

"You are content to live in this house, under the laws and statutes of this society, and in voluntary obedience to its Superior?"

"Yes."

"That is enough."

The Bishop was leaving the cell when his eye was arrested by some writing in pencil on the wall. It ran, "9th of November—Lord Mayor's Day;" and under it were short lines such as a prisoner makes when he keeps a reckoning.

"What is the meaning of this date?" said the Bishop.

John was silent, but the Father answered with a smile, "That is the date of his vow, my lord. It is part of the discipline of his life of grace to keep count of the days of his novitiate, so eager is he for the time when he may dedicate his whole life to God."

Back at the head of the stairs the Father paused again and said "Listen!"

There was the sound as of a trembling hand turning the key in the lock of the door they had shut behind them, and at the next moment the key itself came out of the aperture under it.

When the door closed on the Bishop and John Storm was alone in his cell, one idea was left with him—the idea of work. He had tried everything else, and everything had failed.

He had tried solitude. On asking to be shut up in a cell he had said to himself, "The thought of Glory is a temptation of my unquickened and unspiritual nature. It has already betrayed me into an act of cowardice and inhumanity, and it will drive me out into the world and fling me back again as it drove out and flung back Brother Paul." But the result of solitude was specious and deceit-

ful. As pictures seem to float before the eyes after the eyelids are closed, so his past life, now that it was over, seemed to rise up before him with awful distinctness. Sitting alone in his cell, every event of his life with Glory passed before him in review and harassed him with pitiless condemnation. Why had he failed to realise the essential difference of temperament between himself and that joyous creature? Why had he hesitated to gratify her natural and innocent love of mere life? Why had he done this? Why had he not done that? If Glory were lost, if the wicked and merciless world had betrayed her, the fault was his, and God would surely punish him. Thus would solitude enervate his soul by frightening it, and the temptation he had hoped to vanquish became the more strong and tyrannical.

He had tried reading. The Fathers told him that God allowed ascetics to keep the keys of their nature in their own hands; that they had only to think of woman as more bitter than death, and of her beauty as a cause of perdition, and that if any woman's face tormented them, they were to picture it to the eye of the mind as old and wrinkled, defaced by disease, and even the prey of the worm. He tried to think of Glory as the Fathers directed, but when darkness fell and he lay on his bed, with the first dream of the night the strong powers of nature, that had no mind to surrender, swept down the pitiful bulwarks of religion, and Glory was smiling upon him in her youth, her beauty, her sweetness, her humour, and all the grace of her countless gifts.

He had tried fasting. Three times a day Brother Andrew brought him his food, and twice a day, when the lay brother had left him, he opened the window and

spread the food on the sill for the birds to take it. But the results of fasting were the reverse of his expectations. At one moment he was uplifted by strong emotions, at the next moment he was in collapse. Visions began to pass before him. His father's face tormented him constantly, and sometimes he was conscious of the face of his mother, though he had never known her. But above all and through all there came the face of Glory. Fasting had only extended his dreams about her. He was dreaming both by day and by night now, and Glory was with him always.

He had tried prayer. Hitherto he had said his offices regularly, but now he would say special prayers as well. To get the victory over his lawless and rebellious nature he would turn his eyes to the Mother of the Lord. But when he tried to fix his mind on Mary there was nothing to answer to it. All was shadowy and impalpable. There was only a vague, empty cloud before his eyes, until suddenly a luminous face glided into the vacant place, and it was full of tenderness, of sweetness, of charm, of pity and womanly love—but it was the face of Glory.

Despair laid hold of him. His attempts to overcome nature were clearly rejected by the Almighty. Winter passed with its foggy days. The Father wished him to return to the ordinary life of the community, yet he begged to be allowed to remain.

But the spring came and diffused its joy throughout all nature. He listened to the leaves, he watched the birds threading their way in the clear air, he caught glimpses of the yellow flowers, and strained his eyes for the green country beyond. The young birds began to take wing, and one little sparrow came hopping into his

room as often as he opened his window in the morning, and played about his feet like a mouse, and then was gone to the mother-bird that called to it from the tree.

Little by little hope grew to impatience, and impatience rose to fever-heat, but he remembered his vow, and to put himself out of temptation he locked the door of his cell and pushed the key through the aperture under it. But he could not lock the door of his soul, and his old trouble came up again with the throb of a stronger and fresher life. Every morning when he awoke he thought of Glory. Where was she now? What had become of her by this time? He wrote on the wall the date of her disappearance from the hospital—"9th of November—Lord Mayor's Day"—and tried to keep pace in his mind with the chances of her fate. "I am guilty of a folly," he thought. The pride of his reason revolted against what he was doing. Nevertheless he knew full well it would be the same to-morrow, and the next day, and the next year, for his human passions would not yield, and his vow still clutched him as with fangs.

He was standing one morning by the window looking through an opening between high buildings to the river, with its hay-barges gliding down the glistening water-way, and its little steamers with their spirals of smoke ascending, when everything in the world began in a moment to bear another moral interpretation. The lesson of life was work. Man could not exist without it. If he departed from that condition, no matter how much he fasted and meditated and prayed, he was useless and miserable and depraved.

Then the lock turned in the door of his cell and the Father and the Bishop entered. When they were gone,

he felt suffocated by their praises of his piety, and asked himself, "What am I doing here?" He was a hypocrite. Ten thousand other men whom the Church called saints had been hypocrites before him, and as they paced their cloisters they had asked themselves the same question. But the mighty hand of the Church was over him still, and with trembling fingers he turned the key again and pushed it under the door. Then he knew that he was a coward also, and that religion had deprived him of his will, of his manhood, and enervated his soul itself.

Brother Paul was moving about in the adjoining cell. The lay brother had become very weak; his step was slow, his feet dragged along the floor; his breath was audible, and sometimes his cough was long and raucous. John had heard these sounds every day and had tried not to listen, but now he strained his ears to hear. A new thought had come to him: he would ask to be allowed to nurse Brother Paul; that should be his work, for work alone could save him.

Next morning he leapt up from sleep at the first syllable of "Benedicamus Domino" and cried "Father!" But when the door opened in answer to his call it was the Father Minister who entered. The Superior had gone to give a Retreat to a sisterhood in York and would be absent until the end of Lent. John looked at the hard face of the deputy, the very mirror of its closed and frozen soul, and he could say nothing.

"Is it anything that I can do for you?" said the Father Minister.

"No—that is to say—no, no," said John.

When he opened his window that day he could hear the Lenten services in the church. The prayers, the re-

sponses, the psalms, and the hymns woke to fresh life the memory of things long past, and for the first time he became oppressed with a great loneliness. The near neighbourhood of Brother Paul intensified that loneliness, and at length he asked for an indulgence and spoke to the Father Minister again.

"Brother Paul is ill; let me attend to him," he said.

The Father Minister shook his head. "The brother gets all he wants. He does not wish for constant attendance."

"But he is a dying man, and somebody should be with him always."

"The doctor says nothing can be done for him. He may live months. But if he is dying, let us leave him to meditate on the happiness and glory of another world."

John made no further struggle. Another door had closed on him. But it was not necessary to go to Brother Paul that he might be with him always. The spiritual eye could see everything. Listening to the sounds in the adjoining cell, it was the same at length as if the wall between them had fallen down and the two rooms were one. Whatever Brother Paul did John seemed to see, whatever he said in his hours of pain John seemed to hear; and when he lifted his scuttle of coal from the place at the door where the lay brother left it, John's hand seemed to bear up the weight.

It was a poor, pathetic folly, but it brought the comfort of company, and John thought with a pang of the time when he had wished to be separated from Paul, and had all but asked for a cell elsewhere. Paul had a fire, and John could hear him build and light and stir it; and sometimes when this was done he would sit down him-

self before his own empty grate on his own side of the wall, and fancy they were good comrades sitting side by side.

As the day passed, he thought that Brother Paul on his part also was touched by the same sense of company. His silence at certain moments, his half-articulate salutations, his repetition of the sounds that John himself made, seemed to be the dumb expression of a sense that, in spite of the wall that divided them, and the rule of silence and solitude that separated them on John's side, they were nevertheless together.

Brother Paul's cough grew rapidly worse, and at last it burst into a fit so long and violent as to seem as if it would never end. John held his breath and listened. "He'll suffocate," he thought; "he'll never live through it." But the spasm passed, and there was a prolonged hush, a dead stillness, that was not broken by so much as the sound of a breath. Was he gone? By a sudden impulse, in the agony of his suspense, John stretched out his hand and knocked three times on the wall.

There was a short silence, and then faintly, slowly, and irregularly three other knocks came back to him.

Paul had understood, and John shouted in his joy. But even on top of his relief came his religious fears. Had he broken the rule of silence? Were they guilty of a sin?

Nevertheless, for many days thereafter, though they knew it was a fault, in this vague and dumb and feeble fashion they communicated constantly. On going to bed they rapped "Good-night"; on rising for the day they rapped "Good-morning." They rapped when the bell rang for midday service, and again when the singing came up

through the courtyard. And sometimes they rapped from sympathy, and sometimes from pity, and sometimes from mere human loneliness and the love of company.

Thus did these exiles from life, struggling to live under the eye of God in obedience to their earthly vow, try to cheer their crushed and fettered souls, and to comfort each other like imprisoned children.

XVI.

THE PRIORY, ST. JOHN'S WOOD, LONDON.

BEHOLD, all men and women at Glenfaba, I have made one further change in my *rôle* of female Wandering Jew! You have to think of Glory now, dear people, in a nice house in St. John's Wood, though there is no wood anywhere visible except the Park, where they keep all the wild beasts in London—all that go on four legs, you know. The master of the mansion is Mr. Carl Koenig, a dear old hippopotamus, who is five-feet-nothing in his boots, and has piercing black eyes and an electro-plated moustache. He is a sort of an English-German-Dutch-Polish musician. When he talks of himself as an organist, he is always a little John Bull, being F.R.C.O. and lots of things besides; when he speaks of "Vaterland," he is a German; when he mentions the sea, he is a Dutchman; and when he is in good spirits (or they are in him), he sings "Poland is not lost for ever!" all over the house until you sometimes wish it were.

His wife is an Englishwoman, about forty or more, with big, moist, doggy eyes, that give you an idea of slave-humility and an unappreciated and undeveloped soul. There never were two married folk less alike, she being one of those silent creatures who come into a room and sit and listen and never speak, except to give instructions to the maids, while he is always cackling like an old hen

who can never lay an egg without letting the whole world know all about it. They have two female servants, both beautiful Cockneys, besides a boy in the garden, and a parrot that holds forth all over the place; and their house is the rendezvous of all kinds and conditions of great people, for Mr. Koenig himself is a sort of Gideon's lamp among "pros." of nearly every order.

And now you want to know how I come to be here. You are to learn then that Mr. Koenig happened to be one of my patients in the hospital, he having gone there for a slight operation, and I having helped to nurse him through what he calls his "operatic cure." In the course of that ordeal he had music of a less excruciating kind sometimes, it seems, and after his return home he searched for me all over London on account of my voice, and finding me unexpectedly at last, he sent his wife to Mrs. Jupe's to fetch me, and—and here I am in a dainty little dimity room, whose walls are covered with portraits of well-known singers, violinists, pianists, and composers, with their affectionate inscriptions underneath.

But you want to learn why I am here. Well, you must know that Mr. Koenig (although a foreign musician) is organist of All Saints, Belgravia, where they sing a solo anthem at nearly every Sunday morning service; and having had various disappointments at the hands of vocal soloists from the Opera, whose "professional engagements suddenly intervened," he conceived the audacious idea of "intervening" a woman to do their duty permanently. So this is my position in the church at which John Storm used to be curate, and once a week I pipe that his old enemy the Canon may play. But as that good man is of St. Paul's opinion about women holding their tongues in

the synagogue, and is blest with just enough ear to know a contralto from a corncrake, I have to be hidden away behind a screen in order that his reverence may have all the fun to himself of believing me to be a boy.

So you see, my dearies, you needn't be anxious about me "at all at all," seeing that I am living in this atmosphere of art and the odour of sanctity, and that I have kept only one tiny little thing back, and I am going to tell you that now. You were afraid that I might go too often to the theatre, Aunt Anna. Never mind, auntie, I shall not be going so very often now, and in proof thereof permit me to introduce myself in my future style and character—Miss Glory Quayle, the eminent social entertainer! You don't know what that is, dear people? It is quite simple and innocent nevertheless. I am to go to the houses of smart people when they give their grand parties and sing and recite, and so forth. Nothing wrong, you see—only what I used to do at Glenfaba.

You must know that, just as in the country the men go to the smithy when they have nothing more pressing on hand than to settle the affairs of the universe, and the women to the mangle-house when they have to mangle other things besides clothes, so in the towns the poor rich people have their own particular diversion, which they call their "At Homes." Mr. Drake used to tell me they were terrible Tower-of-Babel concerns, at which everybody talked at once, and all the tongues in the place went "click-clack world without end." But they must be perfectly charming for all that; and when I think of the dresses and the diamonds and the titles as long as your breath—oh dear! oh dear!

I shall see it all soon, I suppose, for to supply the place of the hammer and the anvil the smart folks always

add musical accompaniment to the confusion of tongues, and Mr. Koenig, who has a choral company, goes to the cream of the cream of such gatherings, and sings and plays from Grieg and Schumann, and Liszt and Wagner, and Chopin and Paderewski, and the place intended for me in this grand organisation would appear to be that of jester to my lords and ladies. "Ach Gott!" says Mr. Koenig, who "speaks ver' bad de Englisch," "your great people vant de last new ting. One lady she say to me, 'Dear Mr. Koenig, I think I shall not ask you dis season. I hear you everyvheres I go to, and I get so tired of peoples.' But vhen I takes anoder wis me I am a new beesness. You shall sing and recite your leetle funny tings. Your great people tink dey loof music, but dey loof better to laugh. 'For mercy's sake, make dem laugh, Mr. Koenig'—dat's vhat a great man say to me. But, my gootness, how can I? I am a musician, I am a composer, I am an arteeste!"

For this high and noble office I have been going through a purgatory of preparation in which I have sometimes hardly known whether I was a hurdy-gurdy or an explosion of cats, and the future female jester has even been known to lie down on the floor and cry in her dumps of despair or some such devilry. However Mr. Koenig begins to believe that I am passable, and my first appearance is to be made immediately after Easter, at the house of the Home Secretary, where it is not improbable, dear Aunt Rachel, that I may meet Mr. Drake, although that is no part of my programme.

Of course I shall have to look charming in any case, and I am already busy with my dress. It is a black silk gown with a tight-fitting bodice. The bodice has windbag sleeves, formed of shawl pieces of guipure lace, and

some lilies of the valley on the breast, finished with a waistband of heliotrope velvet, and I am going to wear long black gloves all the way up my arms, which are growing round and plump and lovely enough for anything. The skirt is my old one, and I got the lace for three-and-six, so I am not ruining myself, you see; and though my hair is getting redder than ever, red is the fashionable colour in London now, therefore I shan't waste much money on dyes.

But for all this brave exterior, when the time comes I know that down in my heart I shall be terrified. It will be like the first dive of the year. "One plunge, Glory, my child," and then over I'll go! I partly realise already what it will be like by my experiences on Sunday evenings when the celebrities come here after church, and Mr. Koenig exhibits me to admiring friends, and tells them how I brought him "goot look," and I overhear them say, "That girl will show them all something yet." Oh, this London is adorable, my dears, with its wit and fashion, and gaiety and luxury; and I have concluded that to live in the world is the best thing one can do after all. Some people say hard things about it, and want to reform it, or even to leave it altogether; but I love it, I love it, and think it just charming!

And now spring is here, and the world is lovely in its yellow and green. It must be *urromassy* nice over yandher in the "oilan" too, with the primroses and the violets and the gorse in the glen. Oh dear! oh dear! I can smell it all three hundred miles away! The lilacs will be out at Glenfaba now, and Aunt Anna will be collecting her Easter eggs. Well, wait a whiley and I'll come to thee, my dears!

Not a word from John Storm, of course. No doubt

he is fighting with shadows while other people are struggling with realities. They tell me these Brotherhoods are common in the Church now, though most of them are secret societies; but the more I think of that kind of religion the more it looks like setting tasks to try faith, as if God were a coquettish woman. That reminds me that Mr. Wordly-Wealthy-Wiseman is no longer a Canon, having got himself made Archdeacon, and as such he looks more than ever like a black Spanish cock, being clad, of course, in those funny clothes, like the bishops, which always make one think their lordships must be in doubt on getting up in the morning whether they ought to wear a schoolboy's knickerbockers or a ballet-girl's skirt, so they settle the difficulty by putting on both. For this reason I try to avoid him when on duty at the church, lest I should be suddenly possessed of a devil and behave badly to his face. But this being Lent, and there being special preachers every day, it chanced on Sunday morning that I came upon three of him all in a row, and oh, my gracious! Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these!

It is too bad, though, to think that men like John Storm can't find room in the Church for the sole of their foot, while this archdemon is flourishing in it like a green bay-tree. Forgive me, grandfather; I can't help it. But then the church in the country doesn't seem the same thing as in town. *There* you are somehow made to feel that man does a little and God does all the rest, while *here* we reverse that order of things, with the result that this seed of the Amalekite . . . But never mind!

I went to the Zoo this morning. There was a lion shut up in a cage all by himself. Such a solemn, splendid, silent fellow; I could have cried.

But it is the witching hour of night, my daughter, and you must put yourself to bed. "Goot look!" GLORY.

XVII.

IN the middle of the night of Good Friday, John Storm was awakened by noises in the adjoining cell. There seemed to be the voices of two men in angry and violent altercation, the one threatening and denouncing, the other protesting and supplicating.

"The girl is dead—isn't that proof enough?" said one voice. "It's a lie! It's a false accusation!" said the other voice. "Paul, what are you going to do?" "Put this bullet in your brain." "But I'm innocent. I take the Almighty to witness that I am innocent. Put the pistol down. Help! help!" "No use calling — there's nobody in the house." "Mercy! mercy! I haven't much money about me, but you shall have it all. Take everything—everything—and if there's anything I can do to start you in life . . . I'm rich, Paul—I have influence . . . only spare me!" "Scoundrel, do you think you can buy me as you bought my sister?" "And if I did, I was not the only one." "Liar! Tell that to herself when you meet her at the judgment!" "Assassin!" "Too late—you've met her."

John Storm listened and understood. The two voices were one voice, which was the voice of Brother Paul. The lay brother was delirious. His poor broken brain was rambling in the ways of the past. He was re-enacting the scene of his crime.

John hesitated. His impulse was to fly into Paul's room and lay hold of him, that he might prevent him from doing himself any injury. But he remembered the

law of the community that no member of it should go into the cell of another under pain of grievous penance. And then there was the rule of silence and solitude, which had not yet been lifted away.

But monks are great sophists, and at the next moment John Storm had told himself that it was not Brother Paul who was in the adjoining room, but only his poor perishing body, labouring through the last sloughs of the twilight land of death. Paul himself, his soul, his spirit, was far away. Hence it could be no sin to go into the cell of one whose senses were not there.

His own door was locked, but he scraped back the key and lit his candle, and stepped into the passage. The voices were still loud in Paul's room, but no one seemed to hear them. Not another sound broke the silence of the sleeping house. The cell beyond Paul's was empty. It was Brother Andrew's cell, and Andrew was at the door downstairs.

When John Storm entered the dark room, candle in hand, Brother Paul was standing in the middle of the floor, with one hand outstretched, and a ghastly and appalling smile upon his face. He was pale as death, his eyes were ablaze, his forehead was streaming with perspiration, and he was breathing from the depths of his chest. He wiped the dews from his brow and said in a choking voice, "He has died as he lived—a liar and a scoundrel!"

John took him by the hand and drew him to the bed, and putting him to sit there, he tried to soothe and comfort him. He was terrified at first by the sound of his own voice, but the sophism that had served to bring him served to support him also, and he told himself it could be no breach of the rule of silence to speak to

one who was not there. The delirium of the lay brother spent itself at length, and he fell into a deep sleep.

Next day, when Brother Andrew came to John's cell with the food, he began to sing, as if to himself, while he bustled about the room.

"Brother Paul is sinking—he is sinking rapidly—Father Jerrold has confessed him—he has taken the sacrament—and is very patient."

This, as if it had been a Gregorian chant, the great fellow had hit upon as a means of communicating with John, without breaking rule and committing sin.

John did not lock his door on the following night. On going to bed he listened for the noises he had heard before, half fearing and yet half wishing that he might hear them again. But he heard nothing; and towards midnight he fell asleep. Something made him shudder, and he awoke with the sensation of moonlight on his face. The moon was indeed shining, and its sepulchral light was on a figure that stood by the foot of the bed. It was Paul, with a livid face, murmuring his name in a voice almost as faint as a breath.

John leapt up, and put his arms about him.

"You are ill, brother—very ill."

"I am dying."

"Help! help!" cried John, and he made for the door.

"Hush, brother, hush!"

"Oh, I don't care for rule. Rule is nothing in a case like this. And besides, it is an understood thing . . . Help!"

"I implore you, I conjure you," said Paul, in a voice strangled by weakness. "Let them leave us together a little longer. It was by my own wish that I was left

alone. I have something to say to you, something to confess. I have to ask your pardon."

In two strides John had reached the door, but he came back without opening it.

"Why, my poor lad, what have you done to me?"

"When you let me out of the house to go in search of my sister——"

"That was long ago—we'll not talk of it now, brother."

"But I cannot die in peace without telling you. You remember that I had something to say to her?"

"Yes."

"It was a threat. I was going to tell her that unless she gave up her way of life, I should find the man who had been the cause of it, and follow him up and kill him."

"It was only a temptation of the devil, brother, and it is past and now——"

"Don't you see what I was going to do? I was going to bring trouble and disgrace upon you also as my comrade and accomplice. That's what a man comes to when Satan——"

"But God willed it otherwise, brother—let us say no more about it."

"You forgive me, then?"

"Forgive? It is I who ought to ask for your forgiveness, and perhaps if I told you everything——"

"There is something else. Listen! The Almighty is calling me—I have no time to lose."

"But you are so cold, brother. Lie on the bed, and I'll cover you with the bedclothes. Oh, never fear—they shan't separate us again. If the Father were at home—he is so good and tender-hearted—but no matter. There, there!"

"You will despise and hate me—you who are so holy

and brave, and have given up everything and conquered the world, and even triumphed over love itself."

"Don't say that, brother."

"It's true, isn't it? Everybody knows what a holy life you live."

"Hush!"

"But I have never lived the religious life at all, and I only came to it as a refuge from the law and the gallows, and if the Father hadn't——"

"Another time, brother."

"Yes, the story I told the police was true, and I had really——"

"Hush, brother, hush! I won't hear you. What you are saying is for God's ear only, and whatever you have done God will judge your soul in mercy. We have only to ask Him——"

"Quick, then; the last sands are running out," and he strove to rise and kneel.

"Lie still, brother; God will accept the humiliation of your soul."

"No, no, let me up; let me kneel beside you. The prayer for the dying—say it with me, Brother Storm; let us say it together. 'O Lord, save——'

"'O Lord, save Thy servant,

"'Which putteth his trust in Thee.

"'Send him help from Thy holy place.

"'And . . . evermore . . . mightily defend him.

"'Let the enemy have no advantage over him.

"'Nor the . . . wicked——

"'Be unto him, O Lord, a strong tower.

"'From the——

"'O Lord, hear our prayers.

"'And——'"

"Paul! Paul! Speak to me! Speak! Don't leave me. We will console and support each other. You shall come to me, I will go to you. No matter about the religious life. One word! My lad, my lad!"

But Brother Paul had gone. The captured eagle with the broken wing had slipped its chain at last.

In the terrible peace which followed the air of the room seemed to become empty. John Storm felt chill and dizzy, and a great awe fell upon him. The courage which he had built up in sight of Brother Paul's sufferings ebbed rapidly away, and his old fear of rule flowed back. He must carry the lay brother to his cell; he must be ignorant of his death; he must conceal and cover up everything. The moon had gone by this time, for it was near to morning, and the shadows of night were contending with the leaden hues of dawn.

He opened the door and listened. The house was still quite silent. He walked on tiptoe to the end of the corridor, pausing at every cell. There was no sound anywhere, except the sonorous breathing of some heavy sleeper and the ticking of the clock in the hall.

Then he returned to the chamber of death, and lifting the body in his arms, he carried it back to the room which it had so recently left as a living man. He scarcely felt its weight, for the limbs under the cassock had dried up like withered twigs. He stretched them out on the bed that they might be fit for death's composing hand, and then closed the eyes and laid the hands together on the breast, and took the heavy cross that hung about the neck and put it as well as he could into the nerveless fingers. By this time the daylight had overcome the shadows of the fore-dawn, and the ruddy glow of morning was gliding into the room. Traffic was be-

ginning to stir in the sleeping city and a cart was rattling down the street.

One glance more he gave at the dead brother's face, and going down on his knees beside it, he said a prayer and crossed himself. Then he rose and stole back to his room and shut the door without a sound.

There was a boundless relief when this was done, and partly from relief and partly exhaustion he fell asleep. He slept for a few minutes only, but sleep knows no time, and a moment in its garden of forgetfulness will wipe out the bitterness of a life. When he awoke he stretched out his hand as he was accustomed to do and rapped three times on the wall. But the tide of consciousness returned to him even as he did so, and in the dead silence that followed his very heart grew cold.

Then the Father Minister began to awaken the household. His deep call and the muffled answer which followed it rose higher and higher and came nearer and nearer, and every step as he approached seemed to beat upon John Storm's brain. He had reached the topmost storey—he was coming down the corridor—he was standing before the door of the dead man's cell.

"Benedicamus Domino," he called, but no answer came back to him. He called again, and there was a short and terrible silence.

John Storm held his breath and listened. By the faint click of the lock he knew that the door had been opened and that the Father Minister had entered the room. There was a muttered exclamation and then another short silence, and after that there came the click of the lock again. The door had been closed and the Father Minister had resumed his rounds. When he called

at the door of John Storm's cell, not a tone of his voice would have told that anything unusual had taken place.

The bell rang and the brothers trooped down the stairs. Presently the low droning sound of their voices came up from the chapel where they were saying Lauds. But the service had scarcely ended when the Father Minister's step was on the stair again. This time another was with him. It was the doctor. They entered the brother's room and closed the door behind them. From the other side of the wall John Storm followed every movement and every word.

"So he has gone at last, poor soul."

"Is he long dead, doctor?"

"Some hours certainly. Was there nobody with him then?"

"He didn't wish for anybody. And then you told us that nothing could be done, and that he might live a month."

"Still, a dying man, you know . . . But how strangely composed he looks! And then the cross on his breast as well!"

"He was very devout and penitent. He made his last devotion yesterday, with an intensity of joy such as I have rarely witnessed."

"His eyes closed, too! You are sure there was nobody with him?"

"Nobody whatever."

There was a moment's silence and then the doctor said, "Well, he has slipped his anchor at last, poor soul."

"Yes, he is launched on the ocean of the love of God. May we all be as ready when our call comes."

They came back to the corridor, and John heard their footsteps going downstairs. Then for some minutes there

were unusual noises below. Rapid steps were coming and going, the hall bell was ringing and the front door was opening and shutting.

An hour later Brother Andrew came with the breakfast. He was obviously excited, and putting down the tray he began to busy himself in the room, and to sing, as before, in his pretence of a Gregorian chant—

"Brother Paul is dead—he died in the night—there was nobody with him—we are sorry he has left us, but glad he is at peace—God rest the soul of our poor Brother Paul!"

It was Easter Day. At midday service in the church the brothers sang the Easter Hymn, and a mighty longing took hold of John Storm for his own resurrection from his living grave.

Next day there was much coming and going between the world outside and the adjoining cell, and late at night there were heavy and shambling footsteps, and even some coarse and ribald talk.

"Bear a 'and, myte."

"Well, they won't have their backs broke as carry this one downstairs. He ain't a Danny Lambert, anyway."

"No, they don't feed ye on Bovril in plyces syme as this. I'll lay ye odds yer own looking-glass wouldn't know ye arter three months 'ard on religion and dry tommy."

"It pawses me 'ow people tyke to it. Gimme my pint of four-half, and my own childring to foller me."

Early on the following morning a stroke rang out on the bell, then another stroke, and again another. "It is the knell," thought John.

A group of the lay brothers came up and passed into the room. "Now," said one, as if giving a signal, and

then they passed out again with the measured steps of men who bear a burden. "They are taking him away," he thought.

He listened to their retreating footsteps. "He has gone," he murmured.

The passing bell continued to ring out minute by minute, and presently there was the sound of singing. "It is the service for the dead," he told himself.

After awhile both the bell and the singing ceased, and then there was no sound anywhere except the dull rumble of the traffic in the city outside—the deep murmur of the mighty sea that flows on for ever.

"What am I doing?" he asked himself. "What bolts and bars are keeping me? I am guilty of a folly. I am degrading myself."

At midday Brother Andrew came with his food. "Brother Paul is buried," he sang, "the coffin was beautiful—it was covered with flowers—we buried him in his cassock, with his beads and psalter—we left the cross on his breast—he loved it and died with it in his hands—the Father has come home—he said mass this morning."

John Storm could bear no more. He pushed the lay brother aside and made straight for the Superior's room.

The Father was sitting before the fire, looking sad and low and weary. He rose to his feet with a painful smile as John broke into his cell with blazing eyes and cried in a choking voice—

"Father, I cannot live the religious life any longer. I have tried to—with all my soul and strength I've tried to, but I cannot—I cannot. This life of prayer and penance and meditation is stifling me and corrupting me and crushing the man out of me, and I cannot bear it."

"What are you saying, my son?"

"I have been deceiving you, and myself, and everybody."

"Deceiving me?"

"It was for my own ends, and not Brother Paul's, that I helped him to break obedience, and so injure his health and hasten his death."

"Your own?"

"I, too, had a sister in the world, and my heart was hungry for news of her."

"A sister?"

"Someone nearer than a sister,—and all my spiritual life has been a sham."

"My son, my son!"

"Forgive me, Father. I shall love you and honour you and revere you always; but I must break my obedience and leave you, or I shall be a hypocrite and a liar and a cheat."

XVIII.

THE dinner-party at the Home Secretary's took place on a Wednesday in the week after Easter. It had rained during the day but cleared up towards night. Glory and Koenig had taken an omnibus to Waterloo Place, and then walked up the wide street that ends with the wide steps going down to the Park. Two lines of lofty stone houses go off to right and left, and the house they were going to was one of them.

A footman received them with sombre but easy familiarity. The artistes? Yes. They were shown into the library, and light refreshments were brought in to them on a tray. Three other members of the choral company were there already. Glory was seeing it all for the first time, and Koenig was describing and explaining everything in broken whispers.

A band was playing in the well of the circular staircase, and a second footman stood in an alcove behind an outwork of hats and overcoats. The first footman reappeared. Were the artistes ready to go to the drawing-room?

They followed him upstairs. The band had stopped, and there was the distant hum of voices and the crackle of plates. Waiters were coming and going from the dining-room, and the butler stood at the door giving instructions. At one moment there was a glimpse within of ladies in gorgeous dresses, and a table laden with silver and bright with fairy lamps. When the door

opened the voices grew louder, when it closed the sounds were deadened.

The upper landing opened on to a salon which had three windows down to the ground, and half of each stood open. Outside there was a wide terrace lit up by Chinese and Moorish lanterns. Beyond was the dark patch of the Park, and farther still the towers of the Abbey and the clock of Westminster, but the great light was not burning to-night.

"De House naivare sits on Vednesday night," said Koenig.

They passed into the drawing-room, which was empty. The standing lamps were subdued by coverings of yellow silk lace. There was a piano and an organ.

"Ve'll stay here," said Koenig, opening the organ, and Glory stood by his side.

Presently there were ripples of laughter, sounds of quick indistinguishable voices, waves of heliotrope, and the rustle of silk dresses on the stairs. Then the ladies entered. Two or three of them who were elderly leaned their right hands on the arms of younger women, and walked with ebony sticks in their left. An old lady wearing black satin and a large brooch came last. Koenig rose and bowed to her. Glory prepared to bow also, but the lady gave her a side inclination of the head as she sat in a well-cushioned chair under a lamp, and Glory's bow was abridged.

The ladies sat and talked, and Glory tried to listen. There were little nothings, punctuated by trills of feminine laughter. She thought the conversation rather silly. More than once the ladies lifted their lorgnettes and looked at her. She set her lips hard and looked back without flinching.

A footman brought tea on a tray, and then there was the tinkle of cup and saucer and more laughter. The lady in satin looked round at Koenig, and he began to play the organ. He played superbly, but nobody seemed to listen. When he finished there was a pause, and everybody said, "Oh, thank you; we're all—er——" and then the talk began again. The vocal soloist sang some ballad of Schumann, and as long as it lasted an old lady with an ear-trumpet sat at the foot of the piano, and a young girl spoke into it. When it was over, everybody said, "Ah, that dear old thing!" Then there was an outbreak of deeper voices from the stairs, with lustier laughter and heavier steps.

The gentlemen appeared, talking loudly as they entered. Koenig was back at the organ, and playing as if he wished it were the 'cello and the drum and the whole brass band. Glory was watching everything; it was beginning to be very funny. Suddenly it ceased to be so. One of the gentlemen was saying in a tired drawl, "Old Koenig again! How the old boy lasts! Seem to have been hearing him since the Flood, don't you know."

It was Lord Robert Ure. Glory caught one glimpse of him, then looked down at her slipper and pawed at the carpet. He put his glass in his eye, screwed up the left side of his face, and looked at her.

An elderly man with a leonine head came up to the organ and said, "Got anything comic, Mr. Koenig? All had the influenza last winter, you know, and lost our taste for the classical."

"Vith pleasure, sir," said Koenig, and then turning to Glory he touched her wrist. "How's de pulse? Ach Gott! beating same like a child's! Now is your turn."

Glory made a step forward, and the talk grew louder

as she was observed. She heard fragments of it. "Who is she?" "Is she a professional?" "Oh no—a lady." "Sing, does she, or is it whistling?" "No, she's a professional; we had her last year; she does conjuring." And then the voice she had heard before said, "By Jove, old fellow, your young friend looks like a red standard rose!" She did not flinch. There was a nervous tremor of the lip, a scarcely perceptible curl of it, and then she began.

It was "Mylecharaine," a Manx ballad in the Anglo-Manx, about a farmer who was a miser. His daughter was ashamed of him, because he dressed shabbily and wore yellow stockings; but he answered that if he didn't the stocking wouldn't be yellow that would be forthcoming for her dowry.

She sang, recited, talked, acted, lived the old man, and there was not a sound until she finished, except laughter and the clapping of hands. Then there was a general taking of breath and a renewed outbreak of gossip. "Really, really! How—er—natural!" "Natural—that's it, natural. I never—er——" "Rather good, certainly; in fact, quite amusing." "What dialect is it?" "Irish, of course." "Of course, of course," with many nods and looks of knowledge, and a buzz and a flutter of understanding. "Hope she'll do something else." "Hush! she's beginning."

It was "Ny Kiree fo Niaghtey," a rugged old wail of how the sheep were lost on the mountains in a great snowstorm; but it was full of ineffable melancholy. The ladies dropped their lorgnettes, the men's glasses fell from their eyes and their faces straightened, the noisy old soul with the ear-trumpet sitting under Glory's arm was snuffling audibly, and at the next moment there was a

chorus of admiring remarks. "'Pon my word, this is something new, don't you know!" "Fine girl too!" "Fine! Irish girls often run to it." "That old miser—you could see him!"

"What's her next piece?—something funny, I hope."

Koenig's pride was measureless, and Glory did not get off lightly. He cleared the floor for her, and announced that with the indulgence, &c., the young artiste would give an imitation of common girls singing in the street.

The company laughed until they screamed, and when the song was finished Glory was being overwhelmed with congratulations and inquiries. "Charming! All your pieces are charming! But really, my dear young lady, you must be more careful about our feelings. Those sheep now—it was really quite too sad." The old lady with the ear-trumpet asked Glory whether she could go on for the whole of an afternoon, and if she felt much fatigued sometimes, and didn't often catch cold.

But the lady in satin came to her relief at last. "You will need some refreshment," she said. "Let me see now if I cannot . . ." and she lifted her glass and looked round the room. At the next moment a voice that made a shudder pass over her said—

"Perhaps *I* may have the pleasure of taking Miss Quayle down?"

It was Drake. His eyes were as blue and boyish as before, but Glory observed at once that he had grown a moustache, and that his face and figure were firmer and more manlike. A few minutes afterwards they had passed through one of the windows on to the terrace, and were walking to and fro.

It was cool and quiet out there after the heat and

hubbub of the drawing-room. The night was soft and still. Hardly a breath of wind stirred the leaves of the trees in the Park below. The rain had left a dewy moistness in the air, and a fragrant mist was lying over the grass. The stars were out, and the moon had just risen behind the towers of Westminster.

Glory was flushed with her success. Her eyes sparkled and her step was light and free. Drake touched her hand as it lay on his arm and said—

"And now that I have got you to myself, I must begin by scolding you."

They looked at one another and smiled.

"Have I displeased you so much to-night?" she said.

"It's not that. Where have you been all this time?"

"Ah, if you only knew!" She had stopped, and was looking into the darkness.

"I *want* to know. Why didn't you answer my letter?"

"Your letter?" She was clutching at the lilies of the valley in her bosom.

He tapped her hand lightly, and said, "Well, we'll not quarrel this time, only don't do it again, you know, or else——"

She recovered herself and laughed. Her voice had a silvery ring, and he thought it was an enchanting smile that played upon her face. They resumed their walk.

"And now about to-night. You have had a success, of course."

"Why of course?"

"Because I always knew you must have."

She was proud and happy. He began to be grave and severe.

"But the drawing-room after dinner is no proper scene for your talents. The audience is not in the right

place or the right mood. Guests and auditors—their duties clash. Besides, to tell you the truth, art is a dark continent to people like these."

"They were kind to me, at all events," said Glory.

"To-night, yes. The last new man—the last new monkey——"

She was laughing again, and swinging along on his arm as if her feet hardly touched the ground.

"What is the matter with you?"

"Nothing; I am only thinking how polite you are;" and then they looked at each other again and laughed together.

The mild radiance of the stars was dying into the brighter light of the moon. A bird somewhere in the dark trees below had mistaken the moonlight for the dawn, and was making its early call. The clock at Westminster was striking eleven, and there was the deep rumble of traffic from the unseen streets round about.

"How beautiful!" said Glory. "It's hard to believe that this can be the same London that is so full of casinos and clubs and . . . monasteries.

"Why, what does a girl like you know about such places?"

She had dropped his arm, and was looking over the balcony. The sound of voices came from the red windows behind them. Then the soloist began to sing again. His second ballad was the "Erl King"—

> "Du liebes Kind, komm geh' mit mir!
> Gar schöne Spiele spiel' ich mit dir."

"Any news of John Storm?" said Drake.

"Not that I know of."

"I wonder if you would like him to come out again —now."

"I wonder!"

At that moment there was a step behind them, and a soft voice said, "I want you to introduce me, Mr. Drake."

It was a lady of eight or nine-and-twenty, wearing short hair brushed upwards and backwards in the manner of a man.

"Ah, Rosa—Miss Rosa Macquarrie," said Drake. "Rosa is a journalist, and a great friend of mine, Glory. If you want fame, she keeps some of the keys of it, and if you want friendship . . . But I'll leave you together."

"My dear," said the lady, "I want you to let me know you."

"But I've seen you before—and spoken to you," said Glory.

"Why, where?"

Glory was laughing awkwardly. "Never mind now! Some other time perhaps."

"The people inside are raving about your voice. 'Where does it come from?' they are saying—'from a palace or Ratcliffe Highway?' But I think I know. It comes from your heart, my dear. You have lived and loved and suffered—and so have I. Here we are in our smart frocks, dear, but we belong to another world altogether and are the only working women in the company. Perhaps I can help you a little, and you have helped me already. I may know you, may I not?"

There was a deep light in Glory's eyes and a momentary quiver of her eyelids. Then without a word she put her arms about Rosa's neck and kissed her.

"I was sure of you," said Rosa. Her voice was low and husky. "Your name is Glory, isn't it? It wasn't for nothing you were given that name. God gave it you!"

The party was breaking up and Koenig came for "his star." "I vill give you an engagement for one, two, tree year, upon my vord I vill," he said as they went downstairs. While the butler took him back to the library to sign his receipt and receive his cheque, Glory stood waiting by the billiard-table in the hall, and Drake and Lord Robert stepped up to her.

"Until when?" said Drake with a smile, but Glory pretended not to understand him. "I dare say you thought me cynical to-night, Glory. I only meant that if you are to follow this profession I want you to make the best of it. Why not look for a wider scene? Why not go directly to the public?"

"But de lady is engaged to me for tree years," said Koenig, coming up.

Drake looked at Glory, who shook her head, and then Koenig made an effort at explanation. It was an understood thing. He had taught her, taken her into his house, found her in a Sunday——

But Drake interrupted him. If they could help Miss Quayle to a better market for her genius, Mr. Koenig need be no loser by the change. Then Koenig was pacified, and Drake handed Glory down to a cab.

"We're good friends again, aren't we?" he said, touching her hand lightly.

"Yes," she answered.

There was a letter from Aunt Rachel waiting for her at the Priory. Anna didn't like these frequent changes, and she had no faith in music or musicians either, but the Parson thought Anna too censorious, and as for Mr. Koenig's Sunday evening companies, he had no doubt they were of Germans chiefly, and that they came to talk of Martin Luther and to sing his hymn. Sorry to say

his infirmities were increasing; the burden of his years was upon him, and he was looking feeble and old.

Glory slept little that night. On going to her room, she threw up the window and sat in front of it, that the soft night breeze might play on her hot lips and cheeks. The moon was high and the garden was slumbering under its gentle light. Everything around was hushed, and there was no sound anywhere except the far-off rumble of the great city as of the wind in distant trees. She was thinking of a question which Drake had put to her.

"I wonder if I should?" she murmured.

And through the silence there was the unheard melody of the German song—

"Du liebes Kind, komm geh' mit mir!
Gar schöne Spiele spiel' ich mit dir."

XIX.

THE PRIORY, *May Day*.

DEAR AUNTIE RACHEL,—The great evening is over! Such dresses, such diamonds—you never saw the like! The smart folks are just like other human beings, and I was not the tiniest bit afraid of them. My own part of the programme went off pretty well, I think. Mr. Koenig had arranged the harmonies and accompaniments of some of our old Manx songs, so I sang "Mylecharaine," and they listened and clapped, and then "Ny Kiree fo Niaghtey," and they cried (and so did I), and then I imitated some work-girls singing in the streets, and they laughed and laughed until I laughed too, and then they laughed because I was laughing, and we all laughed together. It was over and done before I knew where I was, and everybody was covering me with—well, no, not kisses, as grandfather used to do, but the society equivalent—ices and jellies, which the gentlemen were rushing about wildly to get for me.

But all this is as nothing compared to what is to happen next. I mustn't whisper a word about it yet, so false face must hide what the false heart doth know. You'll *have* to forgive me if I succeed, for nothing is wicked in this world except failure, you know, and a little sin must be a great virtue if it has grown to be big enough, you see. There! How sagacious of me! You didn't know what a philosopher you had in the family, did you, my dears?

It is to be on the 24th of May. That will be the Queen's birthday over again; and when I think of all that has happened since the last one, I feel as romantic as a schoolgirl and as sentimental as a nursery-maid. Naturally I am in a fearful flurry over the whole affair, and, to tell the truth, I have hied me to the weird sisters on the subject; that is to say, I have been to a fortune-teller and spent a "goolden" half-sovereign on the creature at one fell swoop. But she predicts wonderful things for me, so I am satisfied. The newspapers are to blaze with my name, I am to have a dazzling success and become the idol of the hour, all of which is delightful and entrancing, and quite reasonable at the money. Grandfather will reprove me for tempting Providence, and of course John Storm, if he knew it, would say that I shouldn't do such things under any circumstances; yet to tell me I oughtn't to do this and I oughtn't to do that is like saying I oughtn't to have red hair and I oughtn't to catch the measles. I can't help it! I can't help it! so what's the good of breaking one's heart about it?

But I hadn't got to wait for *Hecate et cie* for what related to the newspapers. You must know, dear Aunt Rachel, that I *did* meet Mr. Drake at the house of the Home Secretary, and he introduced me to a Miss Rosa Macquarrie, who is no longer very young or beautiful, but a dear for all that! and she, being a journalist, has bruited my praises abroad, with the result that all the world is ringing with my virtues. Listen, all men and women, while I sound mine own glory out of a column as long as the Duke of York's:—

"She is young and tall, and has auburn hair" (always thought it was red myself) "and large grey eyes, one of which seems at a distance to be brown" (it squints),

"giving an effect of humour and coquetry and power rarely, if ever, seen in any other face. . . . Her voice has startling varieties of tone, being at one moment soft, cooing, and liquid, and at another wild, weird, and plaintive, and her face, which is not strictly beautiful" (Oh!), "but striking and unforgettable, has an extraordinary range of expression. . . . She sings, recites, speaks, laughs, and cries (literally), and some of her selections are given in a sort of Irish patois" (Oh, my beloved Manx!) "that comes from her girlish lips with charming vivacity and drollness." All of which, though it is quite right, and no more than my due, *of course,* made me sob so long and loud that my good little hippopotamus came upstairs to comfort me, but finding me lying on the floor, he threw up his hands and cried, "Ach Gott! I t'ought it vas a young lady, but vhatever is it?"

Yet wae's me! Sometimes I think how many poor girls there must be who have never had a chance, while I have had so many and such glorious ones; who cannot get anybody to listen to them, while I am so pampered and praised; who live in narrow alleys and serve in little dark shops, where men and men-things talk to them as they can't talk to their sisters and wives, while I am held aloft in an atmosphere of admiration and respect; who earn their bread in clubs and casinos, where they breathe the air of the hotbeds of hell, while I am surrounded by everything that ennobles and refines! O God, forgive me if I am a vain presumptuous creature, laughing at everything and everybody, and sometimes forgetting that many a poor girl who is being tossed about in London is just as good as me, and as clever and as brave!

But hoot! "I likes to be jolly and I allus is." So Aunt Anna doesn't like this Wandering Jew existence!

Well, do you know I always thought I should love a gipsy life. It has a sense of movement that must be delightful, and then I love going fast. Do you remember the days when "Cæsar" used to take the bit in his teeth and bolt with me? Lo, there was little me, astride on his bare back, with nothing to trust to but Providence and a pair of rope reins: but, oh my! I couldn't breathe for excitement and delight! Dear old maddest of created "Cæsars," I feel as if I were whacking at him yet! What do you think of me? But we "that be females are the same craythurs alwis," as old Chalse used to say, and what a woman is in the cradle she continues to be to the end. There again! I wonder who told you that, young lady!

But to tell you the truth at last, dear Aunt Rachel, there is something I have kept back until now, because I couldn't bear the thought of any of you being anxious on my account, especially grandfather, who thinks of Glory so much too often as things are. Can't you guess what it is? I couldn't help taking up my life of Wandering Jew, because I was *dismissed* from the hospital! Didn't you understand that, my dears? I thought I was telling you over and over again. Yes, dismissed as unfit to be a nurse; and so I was, according to the order of the institution first, and human love and pity last. But all's well that ends well, you know, and now that my wanderings seem to be over and I am in my right place at length, I feel like one who is coming out of a long imprisonment, a great peril, a darkness deeper even than John Storm's cell. And if I ever become a famous woman, and good men will listen to me, I will tell them to be tender and merciful to poor girls who are trying to live in London and be good and strong, and that the true chivalry is to band themselves together against the other

men who are selfish and cruel and impure. Oh, this great, glorious, devilish, divine, London! It must stand to the human world as the seething, boiling, bubbling waters of Niagara do to the world of nature. Either a girl floats over its rapids like a boat, and in that case she draws her breath and thanks God, or she is tossed into its whirlpool like a dead body and goes round and round until she finds the vortex and is swallowed up!

There! I have blown off my steam, and now to business. Mr. Drake is to give a luncheon-party in his rooms on the twenty-fourth, in honour of my experiment, but the great event itself will not come off until nearly half-past nine that night. By that time the sun will have set over the back of the sea at Peel, the blackbird will have given you his last "guy-smook," and all the world will be dropping asleep. Now, if you'll only remember to say just then, 'God bless Glory!' I'll feel strong and big and brave.

Your poor, silly, sentimental girlie, GLORY.

XX.

SOME weeks had passed, and it was the morning of the last day of John Storm's residence at Bishopsgate Street. After calling the Brotherhood, the Father had entered John's room, and was resting on the end of the bed.

"You are quite determined to leave us?"

"Quite determined, Father."

The Father sighed deeply and said in broken sentences—

"Our house is passing through terrible trials, my son. Perhaps we did wrong to come here. There is no cross in our foundations, and we have built on a worldly footing. 'Unless the Lord build the house. . . .' It was good of you to delay the execution of your purpose, but now that the time has come . . . I had set my heart on you, my son. I am an old man now, and something of the affection of the natural father——"

"Father, if you only knew——"

"Yes, yes; I know, I know. You have suffered, and it is not for me to reproach you. The novitiate has its great joys, but it has its great trials also. Self has to be got rid of, faith has to be exerted, obedience has to be learned, and, above all, the heart has to be detached from its idols in the world—a devoted mother, it may be —a dear sister—perhaps a dearer one still."

There was silence for a moment. John's head was down; he could not speak.

"That you wish to return to the world only shows that you came before you heard the call of God. Some other voice seemed to speak to you, and you listened and thought it was God's voice. But God's voice will come to you yet, and you will hear it and answer it, and not another. . . . Have you anywhere to go to when you leave this house?"

"Yes, the home of a good woman. I have written to her; I think she will receive me."

"All that you brought with you will be returned, and if you want money——"

"No, I came to you as a beggar; let me leave you as a beggar, too."

"There is one thing more, my son."

"What is it, Father?"

The old man's voice was scarcely audible. "You are breaking obedience by leaving us before the end of your novitiate, and the community must separate itself from you, though you are only a novice, as from one who has violated his vow and cast himself off from grace. This will have to be done before you cross our threshold. It is our duty to the Brotherhood; it is also our duty to God. You understand that?"

"Yes."

"It will be in the church a few minutes before mid-day service."

The Father rose to go. "Then that is all?"

"That is all."

The Father's voice was breaking. "Good-bye, my son."

"Good-bye, Father, and God forgive me!"

A leather trunk which John had brought with him on

the day he came to the Brotherhood was returned to his room, containing the clothes he had worn in the outer world, as well as his purse and watch and other belongings. He dressed himself in his habit as a clergyman, and put the cassock of the Society over it, for he knew that to remove that must be part of the ordeal of his expulsion. Then the bell rang for breakfast, and he went down to the refectory.

The brothers received him in silence, hardly looking up as he entered, though by their furtive glances he could plainly see that he was the only subject that occupied their thoughts. When the meal was over he tried to mingle among them, that he might say farewell to as many as were willing that he should do so. Some gave him their hands with prompt goodwill, some avoided him, some turned their backs upon him altogether.

But if his reception in the refectory was chilling, his welcome in the courtyard was warm enough. At the first sound of his footstep on the paved way, the dog came from his quarters under the sycamore. One moment the creature stood and looked at him with its sad and bloodshot eyes, then with a bound it threw its fore-paws on his breast, and then plunged around him and uttered deep bays that were like the roar of thunder.

He sat on the seat and caressed the dog, and his heart grew full and happy. The morning was bright with sunshine, the air was fragrant with the leafage of spring, and birds were singing and rejoicing in the tree.

Presently Brother Andrew came and sat beside him. The lay brother, like a human dog, had been following him about all the morning, and now in his feeble way he began to talk of his mother, and to wonder if John would ever see her. Her name was Pincher, and she was a

good woman. She lived in Crook Lane, Crown Street, Soho, and kept house for his brother, who was a pawnbroker. But his brother, poor fellow, was much given to drink, and perhaps that had been a reason why he himself had left home. John promised to call on her, and then Brother Andrew began to cry. The sprawling features of the great fellow were almost laughable to look upon.

The bell rang for Terce. While the brothers were at prayers, John took his last look over the house. With the dog at his heels—the old thing seemed determined to lose sight of him no more—he passed slowly through the hall and into the community-room and up the stairs and down the top corridor. He looked again at every inscription on the wall, though he knew them all by heart and had read them a hundred times. When he came to his own cell, he was touched by a strange tenderness. Place where he had thought so much, prayed so much, suffered so much—it was dear to him after all! He went up on to the tower. How often he had been drawn there as by a devilish fascination! The great city looked innocent enough now under its mantle of sunlight, dotted over with green; but how dense, how difficult! Then the bell rang for midday service, though it was not yet noon, and he went down to the hall. The brothers were there, preparing to go into the church. The order of the procession was the same as on the day of his dedication, except that Father Paul was no longer with them—Brother Andrew going first with the cross, then the lay brothers, then the religious, then the Father, and John Storm last of all.

Though the courtyard was full of sunshine, the church looked dark and gloomy. Curtains were drawn across the

windows, and the altar was draped as for a funeral. As soon as the brothers had taken their places in the choir the Father stood on the altar steps and said—

"If any member of this community has one unfaithful thought of going back to the outer world, I charge him to come to this altar now. But woe to him through whom the offence cometh! Woe to him who turns back after taking up the golden plough!"

John was kneeling in his place in the second row of the choir. The eyes of the community were upon him. He hesitated a moment, then rose and stepped up to the altar.

"My son," said the Father, "it is not yet too late. I see your fate as plainly as I see you now. Shall I tell you what it is? Can you bear to hear it? I see you going out into a world which has nothing to satisfy the cravings of your soul. I see you foredoomed to failure and suffering and despair. I see you coming back to us within a year with a broken and bleeding heart. I see you taking the vows of life-long consecration. Can you face that future?"

"I must."

The Father drew a long breath. "It is inevitable," he said, and taking a book from the altar he read the awful service of the degradation:—

"By the authority of God Almighty, Father (✠), *Son and Holy Ghost, and by our own authority, we the members of the Society of the Holy Gethsemane do take away from thee the habit of our Order, and depose and degrade and deprive thee of all rights and privileges in the spiritual goods and prayers which, by the grace of God, are done among us."*

"Amen! Amen!" said the brothers.

During the reading of the service John had been kneeling. The Father motioned to him to rise, and proceeded to remove the cord with which he had bound him at his consecration. When this was done he signalled to Brother Andrew to take off the cassock.

The bell was tolled. The Father dropped on his knees. The brothers, hoarse and husky, began to sing *In exitu Israel de Ægypto.* Their heads were down, their voices seemed to come up out of the earth.

It was all over now. John Storm turned about, hardly able to see his way. Brother Andrew went before him to open the door of the sacristy. The lay brother was crying audibly.

The sun was still shining in the courtyard, and the birds were still singing and rejoicing. The first thing of which John was conscious was that the dog was licking his rigid fingers.

A moment later he was in the little covered passage to the street, and Brother Andrew was opening the iron gate.

"Good-bye, my lad."

He stretched out his hand, then remembered that he was an excommuniated man, and tried to draw it back, but the lay brother had snatched at it and lifted it to his lips.

The dog was following him into the street.

"Go back, old friend."

He patted the old creature on the head, and Brother Andrew laid hold of it by the loose skin at its neck. A hansom was waiting for him with his trunk on the top.

"Victoria Square, Westminster," he called. The cab was moving off, when there was a growl and a lurch—the dog had broken away and was running after it.

How crowded the streets were! How deafening was the traffic! The chuch-bell was ringing for midday service. What a thin tinkle it made out there, yet how deep was its boom within! Stock Exchange men, with their leisurely activity, were going in by their seven doorways to their great market-place in Capel Court.

He began to feel a boundless relief. How his heart was beating! With what a strange and deep emotion he found himself once more in the world! Driving in the dense and devious thoroughfares was like sailing on a cross sea outside a difficult headland. He could smell the brine, and feel the flick of the foam on his lips and cheeks. It was liberty, it was life!

Feeling anxious about the dog, he drew up the cab for a moment. The faithful creature was running under the driver's seat. Before the cab could start again, a line of sandwich-men had passed in front of it. Their boards contained a single word. The word was "GLORIA."

He saw it, yet it barely arrested his consciousness. Somehow it seemed like an echo from the existence he had left behind.

The noises of life were as wine in his veins now. He was burning with impatience to overtake his arrears of knowledge, to see what the world had gone through in his absence. Leaning over the door of the hansom, he read the names of the streets and the signs over the shops, and tried to identify the houses which had been rebuilt and the thoroughfares which had been altered. But the past was the past, and the clock would turn back for no man. These men and women in the streets knew all that had happened. The poorest beggar on the pavement knew more than he did. Nearly a year of his life was gone—in prayer, in penance, in fastings, in visions,

in dreams—dropped out, left behind, and lost for ever.

Going by the Bank, the cab drew up again to allow a line of omnibuses to pass into Cheapside. Every omnibus had its board for advertisements, and nearly every board contained the word he had seen before—"GLORIA."

"Only the name of some music-hall singer," he told himself. But the name had begun to trouble him. It had stirred the fibres of memory, and made him think of the past—of his yacht, of Peel, of his father, and finally of Glory—and again of Glory—and yet again of Glory.

He saw that flags were flying on the Mansion House and on the Bank, and pushing up the trap of the hansom, he asked if anything unusual was going on.

"Lawd, down't ye know what day it is terday, sir? It's the dear ole laidy's birthday. That's why all the wimming's going abart in their penny carridges. Been through a hillness, sir?"

"Yes, something of that sort."

"Thort so, sir."

When the cab started afresh, he began to tell himself what he was going to do in the future. He was going to work among the poor and the outcast, the oppressed and the fallen. He was going to search for them and find them in their haunts of sin and misery. Nothing was to be too mean for him. Nothing was to be common or unclean. No matter about his own good name! No matter if he was only one man in a million! The kingdom of heaven was like a grain of mustard-seed.

When he came within sight of St. Paul's, the golden cross on the dome was flashing like a fiery finger in the blaze of the midday sun. That was the true ensign! That was the great example! It was a monstrous and

wicked fallacy, a gloomy and narrow formula, that religion had to do with the affairs of the other world only. Work was religion! Work was prayer! Work was praise! Work was the love of man and the glory of God!

Glorious gospel! Great and deathless symbol!

END OF VOL. I.

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